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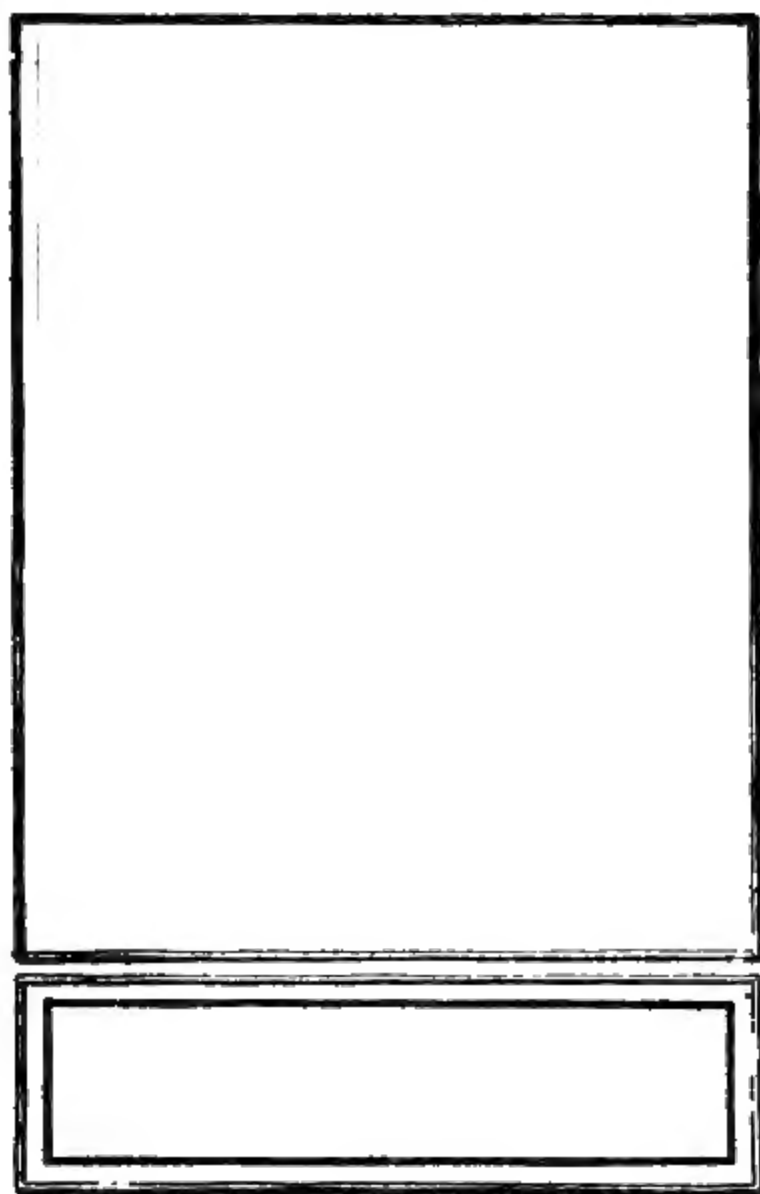
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PERCY 
GHUILLIER
WESTMORLAND





LATER PEEPS AT PARLIAMENT

UNION OF
COLUMBIANS

THE ECLIPSE 1895.

TABLE 1

LATER PEEPS AT PARLIAMENT

TAKEN FROM BEHIND
THE SPEAKER'S CHAIR

BY HENRY W. LUCY

ILLUSTRATED BY
F. C. GOULD

MCMV

LONDON : GEORGE NEWNES, LIMITED,
SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND, W.C.

IIA551
L79

TO VNU
AIRBORNE JAO

40

TO
THE MEMORY OF
SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT
A GREAT COMMONER
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

703137

PREFACE

THE friendly reception that welcomed the appearance of earlier *Peeps at Parliament* was occasionally varied by criticism directed against their point of view. It was complained that the reader, anticipating introduction to scenes in the current Parliament, found himself stranded on a shore passed by at dates going back for ten years.

I must plead absence of responsibility for this disappointment. The several notes were avowedly written under the dates given. Their chief value, such as it is, is their touch with contemporary events, recorded as they passed.

The advantage of this method of presenting Parliamentary history is strikingly shown in the work of my colleague F. C. G. He has drawn Parliament men as they flitted through the scenes enacted, and described in this and the preceding volume, during the decade dating from 1893. The passage of ten years brings changes to all men. Looking over these pages in proof, I confess I am struck by the difference in the personal appearance of old acquaintances who still hold place in the Parliament of to-day.

Of course, those still with us have gained in dignity. The sadness comes in when, glancing over the pages, one

finds how many who commanded attention in the Parliaments of the last ten years of the Nineteenth century have answered *Adsum* to the old lobby cry, "Who goes home?"

To the memory of one of these this little work is inscribed.

H. W. L.

REFORM CLUB, *April* 1905.

CONTENTS

SESSION 1896		PAGE
CHAPTER		
I. DECEMBER		1
SESSION 1897		
II. JANUARY		12
III. FEBRUARY		24
IV. MARCH		37
V. APRIL		52
VI. MAY		67
VII. JUNE		81
VIII. JULY		87
IX. AUGUST		98
SESSION 1898		
X. FEBRUARY		111
XI. MARCH		127
XII. APRIL		142
XIII. MAY		154
XIV. JUNE		166
XV. JULY		181
XVI. AUGUST		194
XVII. SEPTEMBER		207
SESSION 1899		
XVIII. FEBRUARY		222
XIX. MARCH		236
XX. APRIL		248

x LATER, PEEPS AT PARLIAMENT

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXI. MAY	261
XXII. JUNE	274
XXIII. JULY	287
XXIV. AUGUST	301

SESSION 1900

XXV. JANUARY	311
XXVI. FEBRUARY	317
XXVII. APRIL	333
XXVIII. MAY	345
XXIX. JUNE	356
XXX. JULY	369
XXXI. AUGUST	380
XXXII. NOVEMBER	388

SESSION 1901

XXXIII. FEBRUARY	398
XXXIV. APRIL	410
XXXV. MAY	418
XXXVI. JUNE	431
XXXVII. JULY	444
XXXVIII. AUGUST	456

SESSION 1902

XXXIX. FEBRUARY	465
XL. MARCH	473
XLI. APRIL	480
XLII. MAY	492
XLIII. JUNE	503
XLIV. JULY	514
XLV. AUGUST	525
XLVI. OCTOBER	530
XLVII. NOVEMBER	536
XLVIII. DECEMBER	544
INDEX	551

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
Eclipse of 1895	<i>Frontispiece</i>
The Rush from the Lobby	2
“ Division ! ”	3
The late Sir Robert Peel (after Richard Doyle)	6
The late Sir Robert Peel	7
Mr. Rochfort Maguire	9
The late Sir George Campbell	14
“ What a Fearful Creature ! ”	15
Sir Richard Temple turns his Back on the House	17
Waiting for an Opening	19
Trying to Catch the Speaker’s Eye	19
Missed !	20
Mr. Courtney’s Back Up	21
Mr. Lecky’s Maiden Effort	26
Mr. Augustine Birrell’s “ Obiter Dicta ”	27
Lord Morris	30
The late Lord Coleridge	30
“ I sha’n’t Sign the Estimates ”	31
“ Gerald ”	34
A Horrible Discovery	41
“ Who Killed Parnell ? ”	41
A Terrible Offence	44
Notice to Quit	45
Eviction	45
“ Cold, isn’t it, Arthur ”	50
“ Awfully Cold ”	51
“ Bellowing Contumely ”	52
“ He steadfastly regarded the Yelling Mob ”	54

xii LATER PEEPS AT PARLIAMENT

	PAGE
"Dexterously balancing the Hat"	55
"With Courteous Gesture"	56
"Some old Eton Boys"	58
"A grand old Eton Boy"	59
"Sir Henry James going up to the Lords"	59
Sir George Trevelyan	60
Mr. Joseph Arch	64
Mr. Michael Davitt	65
The Four Quarters of Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien	65
In Westminster Hall	67
Mr. Rhodes and the Map	69
Enter the Committee	71
Mr. Parnell Rises	73
With Hat tilted over Brow	75
An uncomfortable Position	76
Sir Henry Edwards and his Statue	77
Sir Henry Edwards on a Trial Trip	78
Trying on O'Connell's Hat	79
Lord Randolph Churchill	84
Lord Melbourne—1837. Lord Salisbury—1897 (two Prime Ministers)	86
Old Westminster Hall.	88
Lord Tweedmouth and the New Rifle	92
Mr. Pitt	93
Very like Sir Frank Lockwood	93
"Anguished Impotence"	96
"Crushed Again!"	96
Mr. William White	100
"Where's my Umbrella?"	101
Mr. Wilson, the Doorkeeper	102
Mr. Caldwell, M.P.	103
Sir Matthew White-Ridley is Funny	104
Sir Michael Hicks-Beach	105
The Midnight Telephone	106
Substance and Shadow	108
Lord Hugh Cecil	109

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xiii

	PAGE
"A Towering Impatience"	112
"One of the Kindest of Men"	112
"A way of Sitting upon People"	113
"A Prisoner in the House of Lords"	116
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman	118
Mr. Asquith	120
Sir Edward Grey	122
Sir Isaac Holden	123
"A Baron of High Degree"	125
The Unexpected Footprint	128
Upright and Stiff-backed	129
The Race for the Leadership	131
In the Place of Disraeli	133
Sir Richard Webster led Captive	136
"I am not an Agricultural Labourer"	137
"Bobby," as he might have been	137
Brawler. Beware!!	138
The Fire and Fury	139
The Calm and Philosophical	139
Time Travels Quickly!!	140
The Earl of Halsbury	142
"Is this Justice?"	143
"The Lost Writ"	144
"Placing a Coronet on his Brow"	145
"Nolo Coronari"	146
Sir John Mowbray	148
"After the Interview"	150
The late Sir G. O. Morgan	152
The New Portmanteau	153
Colonel Sir E. Gourley	155
Mr. Talbot	155
Sir John Kennaway	156
"Popping on and off the Woolsack"	158
The Cross Benches	158
Daybreak on Westminster Bridge	160
The late Sir Henry Havelock-Allan	162

xiv **LATER PEEPS AT PARLIAMENT**

	PAGE
Serjeant Hemphill	163
Mr. Hermon Hodge	164
Mr. Swift MacNeill : "Have you seen Mr. Ward "	164
"The Head of the Army and Chief of the Fleet "	165
"Strolling in Late "	167
"Bracing him up "	167
A "Ballon D'Essai "	168
"Ah, yes, I used to sing it, but that was years ago "	170
"The Red Line "	171
Cap'en Tommy Bowles, of the Horse Marines	173
"Young Mowbray "	174
"Wrong Again ! "	175
"In Solitary State "	176
"Laying "	179
The Whigs take Fright	181
Mr. Jesse Collings leads the Attack	182
Mr. Labouchere as the Messenger of the Gods	184
Captain O'Shea	185
Sir Lewis McIver	187
Mr. Whitbread	188
Joseph addressing his Brethren. An Historical Fragment	189
Mr. Caine keeping Mr. Bright advised	191
The Friendly Broker	191
Storming Down to Downing Street	193
A Glowing Glance	195
The late Lord Playfair	196
Mr. Plimsoll's Outburst	198
The Bust of Lord Randolph Churchill	201
The ex-Speaker—Scathing Indignation	202
The Lord Chancellor quietly drops in	203
Sir John Brunner : "No thanks, I don't want any Ironclads to-day "	206
Walking out for the Last Time	207
He took a great Interest in <i>Punch</i>	208
"An Attractive Listener "	209
A little Friendly Advice	212

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

XV

PAGE

What ! not remember it ? it was only forty-eight years ago	213
The Duke of Argyll writes to the <i>Times</i>	215
Writing a Post-card	217
Facsimile of one of Mr. Gladstone's Post-cards	219
A Beef-eater, temp. Henry VIII.	222
Inspector Horsley	224
A Cave-Man	225
Shelved with a Peerage (Baron de Worms)	226
"Who knew not Jemmy"	226
The humble Function of the Football	227
The Buffer State	229
The late Lord Winchilsea	230
At a Four-mile-an-hour Pace	233
An early Appearance in the Parliamentary Ring	237
M.P., Olden Time	239
Charles James Fox	241
Dr. Johnson watching Parliament	242
Baron "Ferdy"	243
A keen Scent for Jobs (Mr. Hanbury)	246
Lord Althorp (after H.K.B.)	248
William IV. (after H.K.B.)	249
Sir Henry James and the Cotton Duties Tribesmen	252
Sir Henry Fowler's Charge	253
The Deceased Wife's Sister	256
"The Air of a Stolid Man surveying the Capering of a Cage of Monkeys"	257
Mr. Johnston in Prison	259
Beating the Orange Drum	260
"A Pensioner"	261
"The Lost Eye-glass"	264
Lord Herschell—A Sketch in the Lobby	265
Lord Herschell as Lord Chancellor	266
On Guard—Sir William Walrond, Chief Conservative Whip	268
The late Mr. T. E. Ellis—Chief Liberal Whip	269
The Mace of the House of Commons	271
"What on Earth is my Name?"	273

	PAGE
Tom Ellis	274
"Sitting out a Debate"	276
"Mr. Chamberlain takes a Note".	277
"The Chief Secretary's fragile frame"	280
"Mental and Physical Youth"—Mr. James Lowther	281
"The Serjeant-at-Arms will go and fetch him"	282
"Enter Mr. Keir Hardie"	284
"Exit Mr. Keir Hardie"	285
"A Russian Bath in the House of Commons"	286
A Parliamentary Benefactor—Mr. Joseph Cowen	288
The O'Donnell Terror	289
Making a Pudding	291
"Born just before Waterloo"—The late Sir John Mowbray	294
"A Hasty Bath"	297
"Lay Low and said Nuffin"—The late Lord Denman	299
"In the Corner"	301
Mr. Tommy Bowles—His Corner Seat	302
Mr. Gedge in Possession	303
Toujours Gedge	304
Mr. Hart-Dyke's Bull: "Catching a big Fish on the Top of a Tree"	306
"Oh, it was only you, was it?"	307
The only Safe Place (from the Ministerial Point of View)	312
A difficult Mount	313
Sir Algernon West	315
"Irish Obstruction!"	318
Fagged	319
Automatic Gestures—I. Sir William Harcourt	321
Automatic Gestures—II. Sir John Gorst	322
Automatic Gestures—III. Lord Salisbury	323
"Do you know him?" "No! Do you?"	326
Talleyrand sleeping in Pitt's Bed	330
Presiding at a Lecture	333
The Pigtail Party	336
History repeating itself	339
Black Rod	341

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xvii

	PAGE
Mr. Hanbury takes the Business in Hand	343
Pursued by the Treasury	342
Mr. J. W. Lowther, the Chairman of Ways and Means	345
The Hermit of Blaydon-on-Tyne	347
A Shadow of the Past	348
The Conspirators of Europe	349
Dies Iræ	353
"The Admiral's Rum"	354
A Cordite Explosion	357
The Cromwell Statue	359
The Infant Roscius—Mr. W. Redmond	361
The Lord Chancellor wielding the Tea-pot	363
Charles I. and Henrietta Maria	365
A Welsh Orator, Mr. William Jones, M.P.	370
Post-Prandial Humour. Lord Ashbourne and Mr. Chauncey Depew	373
Lord Londonderry (the new Postmaster-General)	374
"Mabon"	375
The Speaker riding on the Whirlwind	378
Sir John Gorst: "I want to make your flesh creep"	380
The Lay of the last V.-P.	381
A flashing Eye	382
Mr. Lecky struck by a Phenomenon	383
The Cult of the Primrose	384
Mr. Asquith jumps into the Cabinet	386
Sir Charles Russell, afterwards Lord Russell of Killowen	388
Mr. Matthews, now Lord Llandaff	390
Nell Gwynne	392
A precious little fat Book	394
Fancy Portrait of the Colonel exploding	397
Master Arthur writing a Letter to the Queen	400
Lord Salisbury and Henry IV. of France	401
"The Real Japan"—Mr. Henry Norman	403
Lord Robert Cecil as a struggling Journalist	405
Sir George Newnes	406
On a back Bench—Mr. Chaplin	407

xviii **LATER PEEPS AT PARLIAMENT**

	PAGE
In the Lions' Den	411
The Raiders—Messrs. Bowles, Hanbury, and Bartley	412
Got no Work to do—Viscount Cross	414
A Family Group	416
The Brothers Balfour	416
"To see the King in his Golden Crown"	418
The Mace accompanied the Speaker	420
An Amendment by Mr. Caldwell	421
The Lord Privy Seal	423
The Order of Precedence	425
Cupid as Postboy	427
A Survival	429
"A Shy at a Bishop"	431
"He was snappish to the Archbishop of York"	432
Coruscating and Blazing	434
The Dismissal of Pam	437
An eloquent Gesture of Despair	439
Lobby-sprinting—What it may come to	441
A popular Figure—His Majesty John Bull	444
The Imperial Nephew	446
The Poet Laureate's Fee	448
Mr. Labouchere sitting on the Civil List	450
Burrowing Powers—The late Sir Edward Watkin	452
The Tunnel Terror	453
The Bishop's Bill—"Dear me! London's a dreadfully expensive place"	456
Approaching the Dean and Chapter	458
Wound up and timed	459
The late Mr. Stansfeld and Mazzini	460
The late Lord Henry Lennox	461
"Pam" as a Winchester Boy	463
The Irish Secretary and Questions	466
Lord Brougham as a Baron of the Cinque Ports	469
The bold Barons and the Canopy	470
Sir W. Harcourt's Notes	473
"Rehearsing"	475

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

xix

PAGE

Sir George Cornewall Lewis	479
Carrying Mr. Flavin out	481
Willie Redmond catches sight of Mr. Chamberlain	482
Tommy Atkins reverting to Civilian Life	485
The real Great Seal	486
Willie Redmond hugs Mr. Kruger	489
Mr. Thomas Lough	490
Major O'Gorman	493
Mr. Whalley as imagined by Mr. Newdegate	494
Mr. Caldwell at work	497
Mr. Jeffreys, the new Deputy Speaker	498
Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Financial Secretary to the Treasury	499
"Is that Shaw-Lefevre?"	501
The Earl of Derby	503
The late Right Hon. W. E. Forster	505
Mr. Brodrick reading Lord Kitchener's Despatch	507
The Joy of Swift MacNeill	507
Just popping in—"I hope I don't intrude"	512
Disapproval	512
The Lord Chancellor has a Narrow Escape	515
"A belted Earl thumping the Table"	517
"Judas! Judas!"	520
In the Bull-field	522
A fancy Portrait	523
Sir William Harcourt as Lord Keeper in the time of Queen Anne	527
The Lord Chancellor as George III.	527
"Nolo Coronetari"	530
The late Mr. Johnston of Ballykilbeg	532
Mr. Speaker taking the Oath	537
Mr. Dillon on the <i>Globe</i>	539
Sir B. Stone posing a Subject	541
The Vision of the Woolsack	545
The Cordite Conspiracy—Mr. Brodrick applies the Torch	548

LATER PEEPS AT PARLIAMENT

SESSION 1896

CHAPTER I

DECEMBER

ONE night in the last Session of the Rosebery Parliament a breathless messenger brought news to the Serjeant-at-Arms that the bells would not ring. It happened that an important division, on which the fate of the Government depended, was within measurable distance. The House of Commons and its precincts are connected by an elaborate system of electric bells, commanded from the seat of the principal doorkeeper. When a division is called he touches a knob and, lo! in the smoking-room, dining-room, tea-room, library, along all the corridors, upstairs and downstairs, there throbs the tintinnabulation of the bells.

This phenomenon is so familiar, and works with such unerring regularity, that members absolutely depend upon it, absenting themselves from the Chamber with full confidence that, as long as they remain in the building, they cannot miss a division. The only places in the Palace at Westminster frequented by members of the House of Commons the electric bells do not command are the bar and the galleries of the House of Lords. On the few occasions when attractive debate is going forward in the other Chamber, drawing a contingent of members of the House

Dumb Bells.

of Commons, special arrangements are made for announcing a division. A troop of messengers stand in the lobby like hounds in leash. At the signal of a division, they set off at the top of their speed, racing down the corridor, across the central lobby, into the Lord's lobby, and so, breathless, bring the news to Ghent.

In an instant all is commotion in the space within the House of Lords allotted to the Commons. The time

THE RUSH FROM THE LOBBY.

between signalling a division and closing the doors of the House of Commons against would-be participants is, nominally, three minutes. This is jealously marked by a sand-glass which stands on the clerks' table. When it empties, the doors are locked, the Speaker puts the question for the second time, and only those within hearing may vote. Three minutes is a somewhat narrow space of time for the double event of the race of the messengers to the door of the House of Lords and the rally of members at the door of

the House of Commons. The always-waiting crowd of strangers in the lobby are on such occasions much astonished to find tearing along—some handicapped by years or undue weight of flesh, most of them out of training and breath—a long string of legislators.

From any of the ante-chambers of the House of Commons the race can be comfortably done under the stipulated time. But when electric bells fail, the situation becomes serious. With such majorities as the late Government commanded, the accident of half-a-dozen or a dozen of their supporters missing the call might, as it finally did, lead to defeat and dissolution. Happily, on the occasion here recorded, notice of the failure had been duly conveyed to the Serjeant-at-Arms. In order to avoid catastrophe, the police and messengers were specially organised. Each man had his appointed beat. When the signal was given he was to run along it, roaring "Division! Division!" It was rather an exciting pastime, but it succeeded, and the Ministry were for the time saved.

When workmen arrived on the scene and traced the accident to its source, it was discovered that the central wire had become disconnected. It was evidently an accident, but it suggests possibilities which certainly on one occasion were realised. It happened in the earliest days of Irish obstruction. A little band, under the captaincy of Mr. Parnell, fought with their backs to the wall against the united Saxon host. All-night sittings were

"DIVISION!"

Cutting the
Wires.

matters of constant occurrence. About this time the St. Stephen's Club was established, and the Conservative wing cheerfully availed themselves of the opportunity of varying the monotony of long sittings by going across to dine. A special doorway opened from the Club on to the underground passage between the Houses of Parliament and the Metropolitan District Railway Station, a convenience the Committee of the House of Commons, before whom the Company's Bill came, insisted upon as a condition of passing it. The Club dining-room was connected with the House of Commons by an electric bell, an extension of the system which called to divisions members within the precincts of the House. A series of experiments demonstrated that the division lobby could be reached in good time if the summons were promptly answered.

On a day towards the close of a fighting Session, the Irish members moved an amendment to the passing of the Mutiny Bill. They loudly protested their intention of sitting all night if necessary to delay, if it were not possible to defeat it. In view of this prospect, a good dinner, leisurely eaten at the St. Stephen's Club, promised an agreeable and useful break in the sitting. Just before eight o'clock the Gentlemen of England trooped off to the Club. They were not likely to be wanted for the division till after midnight. If by accident a division were sprung upon the House, the bell would clang here as it did in the Commons' dining-room, and they would bolt off to save the State.

Nothing happened. They ate their dinner in peace and quietness, and, strolling back about half-past ten, were met at the lobby door by the desperate Whip, who, in language permitted only to Whips and the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, reproached them with their desertion. They learned to their dismay that soon after eight o'clock the Irish members had permitted the debate to collapse. Ministers, grateful for the deliverance and assured of a majority, made no attempt to prolong it. The bells clanged along the corridors and through all the rooms. The Irish

members mustered in full force. Ministerialists trickled in in surprisingly small numbers. It was no business of the Liberal Opposition to help the Government on this particular issue. They had gone off comfortably to dinner. The Ministerial Whips had in hand, dining in the House, sufficient to make a quorum. Presently the St. Stephen's contingent would come rushing in, and all would be well.

Mr. Hart-Dyke whipped his men into the lobby. The face of Mr. Rowland Winn grew stonier and stonier as he stood at the top of the stairway waiting for the hurried tramp of the diners-out. But Sister Anne saw no one coming, and just managed to get back herself before the doors closed. Ministers had a majority, but it was an exceedingly small one.

Investigation revealed the curious fact that the bell wire running along the underground passage between the House and the St. Stephen's Club had been cut. Of course, it was never—at least, hardly ever—known who did it.

Richard Doyle, familiarly known as "Dicky," was, at least, once present at a debate in the House of Commons. The occasion was fortunate for posterity, since it chanced upon the night of the maiden speech of the second Sir Robert Peel,¹ son of the great Dicky Doyle
in the Special
Gallery. Commoner whose last wish it was that he might "leave a name remembered by expression of good-will in those places which are the abode of men whose lot it is to labour and to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow."

Dicky Doyle, after a fashion still common to his brethren and successors on the *Punch* staff, was accustomed to illustrate his private correspondence with pen-and-ink sketches. In a letter dated from 17 Cambridge Terrace, Hyde Park, March 27, 1851, Doyle sent to Lady Duff Gordon a sketch of the then new member for Tamworth, which, by the courtesy of Mr. Fisher Unwin, F.C.G. is reproduced on next page. The letter will be found, with much other interesting matter, in Mistress Janet Ross's *Three Generations of Englishwomen*. has

¹ Sir Robert Peel died in 1895.

"Through the kindness of the Speaker," Doyle writes, "I have been permitted every evening almost during the 'Aggression' debates to sit in that part of the House of Commons devoted to the peers and foreign Ministers. Under which of these denominations I passed it is impossible for me to decide, but we will suppose it was a diplomatic 'poor' relation from Rome. In this distinguished position I heard the speeches of Sir James Graham with delight, of Mr. Newdegate with drowsiness, of Mr. Drummond with shame mingled with indignation, of the new Sir Robert Peel with surprise and contempt. This (the sketch) is what the last-named gentleman is like. How like his father, you will instantly say. His appearance created in the 'House' what Miss Talbot's did in the fashionable world, according to Bishop Hendren, a 'sensation'; and when he rose to speak, shouts of 'New member!' rose from every side, and expectation rose on tiptoe, while interest was visible in every upturned and outstretched countenance, and the buzz of eager excitement prevailed in the 'first assembly of gentlemen in the world.' There he stood, leaning upon a walking-stick, which from its bulk you would have fancied he carried as a weapon of defence, young and rather handsome, but with a somewhat fierce and, I would say, truculent look about the eyes; hair brown, plentiful, and curly, shirt collar turned down, and, O shade of his father! a large pair of moustaches upon his Republican-looking 'mug'!!! He has a manly voice and plenty of confidence, and his speech made up by its originality what it wanted in common sense, and was full of prejudice, bigotry, and illiberal Radicalism, while it lacked largeness of view, and was destitute of statesmanship."



THE LATE SIR
ROBERT PEEL (AFTER
RICHARD DOYLE).

That is to say, the new member differed entirely from Doyle on the subject under discussion. Whence these remarks which show that, in the matter of political criticism,

things did not greatly differ in the Exhibition Year from the manner in which they run to-day.

Sir Robert Peel was elected member for Tamworth in 1850, and had not been in the House many months when he made his maiden speech. To the end he succeeded in retaining that interest of the House of Commons which the shrewd, if prejudiced, observer in the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery noted forty-four years ago. There was a time when Sir Robert promised to sustain in the political and Parliamentary world the high reputation with which his name was endowed by his illustrious father. He was promptly made a Lord of the Treasury, and in 1861 Lord Palmerston promoted him to the post of Chief Secretary for Ireland. Sir Robert was always original, and he asked to be relieved from this post for a reason Mr. Arthur Balfour and Mr. John Morley will contemplate with amazed interest. There was not enough for him to do, he said, and he must needs clear out.

He sat for Tamworth through an uninterrupted space of thirty years. The wave of Radical enthusiasm that brought Mr. Gladstone into power in 1880 swept away Sir Robert Peel and many others, whose Liberalism was not sufficiently robust for the crisis. For four years he was out of Parliament. But his heart, untravelled, fondly turned to the scene with which his family traditions and the prime of his own life were closely associated. In 1884 he returned as member for Huntingdon, to find fresh lustre added to the name of Peel. His brother had, in the previous month, been elected Speaker, and the House was already

Sir Robert
Peel II.

THE LATE SIR ROBERT PEELE.

beginning to recognise in him supreme ability for the post.

I have to this day a vivid recollection of the play of Sir Robert's lips and the twinkle in his eye when Sir Erskine May, then still Chief Clerk, brought him up in the usual fashion to introduce him to the Speaker. Sir Robert bowed with courtly grace, and held out his hand with respectful gesture towards his new acquaintance. One mindful for the decorum of Parliamentary proceedings could not help being thankful when the episode was over. There was something in Sir Robert's face, something in his rolling gait as he approached the Chair, that would not have made it at all astonishing if he had heartily slapped the Speaker on the shoulder, or even playfully poked him in the ribs, and observed, "Halloa, old fellow! Who'd have thought of finding you here? Glad to see you!"

That Sir Robert was not to be warned off from the use of colloquialisms by seriousness of surroundings was often proved during the latter portion of his Parliamentary career. On the historic night in the Session of 1878, when the House of Commons was thrown into a state of consternation by a telegram received from Mr. Layard, announcing that the Russians were at the gates of Constantinople, Sir Robert Peel airily lectured the House in general, Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright in particular, for "squabbling about little points." A bolder and better remembered flight of humour occurred to him when discussing a vote in Committee of Supply on account of a so-called work of art just added to the national store by the sculptor Boehm. Sir Robert's peculiar pronunciation of the word, his dramatic sniffing of the nostrils as he looked round, and his exclamation, "Boehm? Boehm? It *smells* an English name," immensely delighted an after-dinner audience.

The last time I saw Sir Robert Peel was at St. Margaret's Church, on the occasion of the wedding of his niece, the Speaker's daughter, to Mr. Rochfort Maguire. He came in late and stayed for a while, looking upon the scene from the top of the aisle. His bright face, upright figure, and

general bearing gave no premonition of the fact that three weeks later, to the very day, St. Margaret's Church would be filled again, partly by the same congregation, once more the occasion closely connected with the Peel family history. But now the wedding chimes were hushed; the funeral bells took up the story, telling how, at that hour, in the parish church where his father had worshipped and where he himself had slumbered through long sermons in school-boy days, the second Sir Robert Peel was left to his final rest.

Many years ago, on an Atlantic steamer outward bound, I made the

A Rancher.

acquaintance of a notable man. It was at the time

when, long before South Africa had become Tom Tiddler's ground, cattle ranches were a booming market for the English speculators. My friend, who was, of course, a Colonel, commenced

MR. ROCHFORD MAGUIRE.

life as a cowboy, and gradually acquired flocks and herds till he became rich beyond the dreams of avarice. He was a man of distinguished appearance, of gentlest manner, and, as I soon learned, of most chivalrous nature. But so deeply ingrained were his cowboy habits, so recently applied the veneer of civilisation, that in the course of conversation—and on some subjects his talk had all the freshness and charm of a little child—he interpolated a prolonged and fearsome oath.

"Ex-cuse," he said, when these fits came over him, bowing his head and speaking in gentlest tones. Then he went on talking with his musical drawl till suddenly he stumbled into another pitfall of bad language, coming out again with bowed head, sweet smile, and his long-drawn, plaintive, "Ex-cuse; kotation."

One thing he told me of his first appearance in civilisation befell him on his first visit to Chicago. Putting up, as became a man of his wealth, at the best hotel in the city, he was struck with the magnificence of the dining saloon, with its rich, soft, thick carpets, its massive chandeliers, its gilt pillars, and its many mirrors. Seeing what he thought was another large room leading out of the one in which he stood at gaze, the Colonel advanced to explore it—and walked right into a mirror, smashing the glass and cutting himself. He had never in his life seen anything of that kind. The delusion was complete, broken only with the shivered glass.

I thought of my friend the Colonel the other night at the house of a well-known Amphitryon. It was an evening party, at which Royalty was present in unusual muster. A brilliant company gathered to meet them, many of the women fair, most of the men bravely attired in Ministerial, Court, naval, or military uniforms. At midnight the room in which a sumptuous supper was spread was crowded. At one table stood a well-known member of the House of Lords, in animated conversation with a group of friends. Bidding them good-night, he turned to leave the room, and strode straight up to a mirror that covered a wall at one end.

He halted abruptly as he observed a man walking with rapid pace to meet him. He stood and looked him straight in the face, the other guest regarding him with equal interest. The noble lord, pink of courtesy, slightly bowed and moved a step to the right to let the new-comer enter. By an odd coincidence (not uncommon in these encounters) the stranger took exactly the same direction, and there they stood face to face again. With a smile and another bow, the peer moved smartly to the left.

Never shall I forget the look of amazement reflected in his face as, staring into the glass, he discovered that the stranger had once more made a corresponding movement and stood before him.

"I beg your pardon," he murmured, in faltering tones.

Whether the sound of his own voice broke the spell, or whether he saw the lips of his *vis-à-vis* moving and recognised his own face, I do not know. The truth flashed upon him, and with rapid step he made for the door in the corner at right angles with the mirror and disappeared.

SESSION 1897

CHAPTER II

JANUARY

AMONGST the first work to be done in the new Session that opens this month is the reappointment of the Select Committee nominated last year to inquire into **Strangers in the House.** the circumstances that led up to the raid on the Transvaal. It may be useful, for purposes of reference, to give a list of the members of the Committee as set forth in the columns of the Paris *Gil Blas*. It runs thus : Sir milord Willam Hardtcourte, Sir H. Campell Bamnermard, Sir Michael Chicks Black, Sir Richard Webster, Lydney Bluxtone, H. Lebouchère Bigham, Sir Hart-Dyki, and M. Chamtertain.

When on Mr. Gladstone's trip to the Kiel Canal the *Tantallon Castle* touched at Copenhagen, a local paper gave a list of the principal guests, which included Lord Randoll, Lord Welley, Sir Writh Pease, Sir John Leng Baith, and Sir Cuthbert Quiets. Under these disguises fellow-passengers recognised Lord Rendell, Lord Welby, Sir Joseph Pease, Sir John Leng, and (though this was more difficult) Mr. Cuthbert Quilter, M.P.

But for picturesque spelling of proper names Paris beats Copenhagen.

A notable, unvarying, and unexplained phenomenon of the House of Commons is the failure of men who enter it after

having established high reputation in India. The matter is the more marvellous since success in such a ^{Sir George} career implies exceptional ability. Three cases ^{Balfour, K.C.B.} within recent memory illustrate the rule. Sir George Balfour, who represented Kincardineshire in three Parliaments, had a distinguished executive and administrative career in India. Having served in the artillery till he rose to the rank of Major-General, he became President of the Military Finance Commission of India, and was, for a while, chief of the Military Finance Department.

In his sixty-third year he began a new life in London, entering upon Imperial politics with the zest of perennial youth. He took to speaking in the House of Commons as a duck takes to water. But no House—not the great Liberal Parliament elected in 1868, the Conservative host under Mr. Disraeli's leadership in the 1874 Parliament, nor the Liberals, back again like a flood in 1880—would listen to the poor old General. For years he plodded on, his face growing more deeply furrowed, his voice taking on nearer resemblance to a coronach. In lapses of the roar of "'Vide! 'Vide! 'Vide!" that greeted his rising, the wail of the General was heard like the far-off cry of a drowning man in a storm at sea.

In the end he retired from the struggle, and for a Session or two sat silent in his familiar seat behind the Front Bench. A look of yearning pathos filled his eyes as he watched member after member upstanding, and delivering a speech to which the House more or less attentively listened, whereas him it persistently shouted down.

The member for Kirkcaldy was of tougher metal than his colleague of Kincardineshire. He was, moreover, a far abler man. Sir George Campbell was Lieutenant- ^{Sir George} Governor of Bengal during the great famine. ^{Campbell.} Quitting India whilst the plague had not been entirely stayed by his energetic and well-directed efforts, the *Times* threw its hands up in Editorial despair. The question what would become of India when Sir George Campbell had forsaken it seemed at the time appalling.

When he first took his seat for Kirkcaldy, Sir George was still in the prime of life as time is counted in the political arena. Just turned fifty, he might reasonably count on fifteen, perhaps twenty, years of active life in which on new ground he might repeat, even excel, his triumphs in India. Indian questions he had at his finger ends. In the course of an active life and wide reading he had amassed a store of information on a wider range.

Perhaps that was the secret of his Parliamentary failure. He could talk on any subject at any length, and was not indis-

THE LATE SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL.

posed to oblige. A further peculiar disadvantage was possession of one of the most rasping voices ever heard on land or sea. In the 1886 Parliament the mere sound of Sir George Campbell's voice at the opening sentence of a speech was sufficient to send the merry-hearted Unionist majority into a roar of laughter.

The temptation to score off Sir George was great, since nothing pleased the House more than success in that direction. One afternoon questions, of which due ^{Fearful} ^{Creatures!} notice had been given, were addressed to Mr. Plunket,¹ then First Commissioner of Works, with respect to the carving of strange birds and beasts with which the new staircases in Westminster Hall had been ornamented. No one was dreaming of Sir George Campbell. It wasn't his show, but he must needs poke his nose into it. Mr. Plunket had disclaimed authority in the matter.

"Who, then," cried Sir George, at the top of his voice "is responsible for these fearful creatures?"

Mr. Plunket returned to the table, and bending a beaming face upon Sir George said, in musical voice that contrasted

¹ Now Lord Rathmore.

pleasantly with the rasping of a file, "I am not responsible for fearful creatures in Westminster Hall, or in this House either."

In the following Session Sir George accidentally and undesignedly gave a fresh point to this little gibe by a slip of the tongue. Having, in companionship with Mr. Storey, Mr. Conybeare, and two or three other members below the gangway, long withstood the Government in Committee of Supply, Sir George, in one of twenty-three

"WHAT A FEARFUL CREATURE!"

speeches delivered on a single night, desired to make reference to "the band of us devoted guerillas." In the tornado of his hurried speech he got a little mixed, and presented himself and his coadjutors to the notice of a delighted House as "the band of us devoted gorillas."

One of Sir George's minor fads was objection to the device of St. George and the Dragon employed for coins which passed currency in Scotland. St. George was all very well for mere Southerners. North of the Tweed, St. Andrew was the saint. In Committee of Supply he returned to this subject, dwelling upon it as if he approached it for the first time. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had replied a score of times to the question, made no sign, and the Chairman of Committees had risen to put the question. Sir George bore down upon him with ungovernable fury, threatening to move to report progress if

he were thus ignored. Mr. W. H. Smith, still with us at the time, interposed with characteristic effort to throw oil on the troubled waters. Sir George, in response, clamoured for a pledge that in any new coinage the familiar device should not be introduced. Hereupon, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, ever a man of peace, suggested, as a compromise, that the die should be cut to represent *Sir* George and the Dragon.

Amid the uproarious laughter that followed, the vote under discussion was hastily put and further discussion by Sir George Campbell necessarily deferred.

Still another eminent Indian statesman who found a low level in the House of Commons was Sir Richard Temple.

Sir Richard Temple. Sir Richard has recently published the *Story of his Life*, from which it appears how intimately and directly he was connected with the growth and prosperity of India over a period of twenty-nine years. He was nine years older than Sir George Campbell when he entered the Parliamentary arena. In mental and physical vigour he was at least his equal. Sir Richard's career in India had been one of unchecked advancement—the reward of honest hard work and high administrative capacity. As he himself modestly puts it, he “was fortunate in climbing rapidly up the steps of the ladder in a comparatively short time, and remaining at or near the top for the greater part of my official days.”

He came to Westminster just as Napoleon went to Spain after his triumphs in Italy and Germany, meaning to possess himself of a new territory as a matter of course. Excluding Irish members from the computation, Sir Richard in one respect beat the record. “In the Commons,” he writes, on the day before he took the oath, “I wish to comport myself modestly and quietly.” He began by making his maiden speech on the first night of the opening Session of a new Parliament!

Thereafter Sir Richard was one of the most active competitors in the game of catching the Speaker's eye. He had an advantage inasmuch as he was always on the spot. It was his boast that, out of the 2118 divisions taken in the

Parliament of 1886-92, he voted in 2072. In respect of the mastery of other questions besides those specially pertaining to India, Sir Richard had exceptional claims to the attention of the House of Commons. But he never succeeded in catching its ear, and after a struggle not less gallant and prolonged than that of Sir George Balfour or Sir George Campbell, he shook the dust of the House from off his feet.

Macaulay, another eminent immigrant from India, after brief ex-

perience, described the ~~reason why~~ House of Commons as the most peculiar audience in the world. "I should say," he wrote to Whewell sixty-six years ago, "that a man's being a good writer, a good orator at the Bar, a good mob orator, or a good orator in debating clubs, was rather a reason for expecting him to fail than for expecting him to

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE TURNS
HIS BACK ON THE HOUSE.

succeed in the House of Commons. A place where Walpole succeeded and Addison failed; where Dundas succeeded and Burke failed; where Peel now succeeds and where Mackintosh fails; where Erskine and Scarlett were dinner-bells; where Lawrence and Jekyll, the two wittiest men, or nearly so, of their time, were thought bores, is surely a very strange place."

In the case of men who have made their mark in India there is not even this attraction of variety. They all prove dinner-bells. One reason for this is that they enter the House too late in life. There are exceedingly few exceptions to the rule that men do not reach supreme position in the House of Commons unless they enter it on the sunny side of thirty.

More directly fatal to House of Commons success of

Indian ex-Ministers and officials is the absolutely altered conditions of life. Stepping from Government House in one of the Provinces of India on to the floor of the House of Commons, they experience a more striking and not so attractive a transformation as Alice realised when she wandered into Wonderland. For years accustomed to autocratic power, his lightest whisper a command, the ex-Satrap finds himself an unconsidered member of a body of men who, unless their demeanour is misleading, would think nothing of tweaking the nose of the ex-Governor of Bombay or digging in the ribs the ex-Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

The lesson is learnt in time. To begin with, it is difficult for a man who, as Sir Richard Temple boasts in his own case, has ruled over millions, to realise that he must compete with borough members and the like in the effort to catch the Speaker's eye. His earliest natural impulse is to clap his hands and order the optic to be brought to him on a charger. By the time the hard lesson is learned spirit is broken, ambition is smothered, old age creeps on, and strong, capable, successful men, who have thrown up high appointments in India in order to serve their country and themselves in a Parliamentary career, find how much sharper than a serpent's tooth is House of Commons' ingratitude.

The gentlemen of England who live at home at ease, and, morning after morning, through an important debate
Unnamed in the House of Commons, glance down the
Heroes. report of speeches delivered on the previous night, reckon little of tearless dumb tragedies that take place in the historic Chamber and find no record. It is all very well for the man who has worked off his speech, even if the benches should empty at his rising, and the newspapers give the barest summary of his argument.

Alas for those who never sing,
But die with all their music in them.

Through nights of big debates, for one member who

catches the Speaker's eye there are, at least, twenty who compete in the emprise and lamentably fail. It is no uncommon thing to see a member sit hour after hour, notes of his speech in hand, waiting till successive orators have made an end of speaking, eagerly jump up, and be passed over by the Speaker. The House, long inured to misfortune in others, passes it over without sign of emotion. But it is no light thing for the man directly concerned.

To begin with, he has presumably spent much time

WAITING FOR AN OPENING.

in studying the subject of debate and in laborious preparation of a speech. He must be down early to secure a seat. Whilst others go off to chat in the lobby, to smoke on the terrace, to read the papers, or leisurely to dine, he must remain at his post, ready to jump up whenever an opening is made. To take one turn at this and be disappointed is hard.

TRYING TO CATCH THE SPEAKER'S EYE.

To do it all through a night seems unendurable. To repeat

the experience night after night, and hear the division called with the speech yet unspoken, is sufficient to blight existence.

Yet such a fate is by no means uncommon. In some cases a last pang is added by the consciousness that the wife of one's bosom, or the dutiful daughters who believe Pa's oratory would remove mountains of objection, regard the shameful scene from the seclusion of the Ladies' Gallery.

Disgust and disappointment, born of this evil fate, occasionally find expression in pro-

The Front Benches.

test against the number and length of speeches delivered from either Front Bench. It will be understood in what mood a member, smarting under constant repulse, sees another chance snatched from him by the interposition of a

MISSED !

minor Minister or, worse still, by an ex-Under Secretary rising from the Front Opposition Bench, reeling off his speech as a matter of course and right. In big debates, where the pressure of oratory is overpowering and time limited, the Whips on either side make up a list in due order of precedence, which they hand to the Speaker. This he is glad enough to avail himself of, whilst not abrogating his right to make such selection as he pleases.

Members of the present House of Commons have never heard the old Parliamentary roar of passionate wrath.

“Vide !” Sometimes when an unwelcome member to-day “Vide ! ‘Vide !’” interposes in debate, or another, having been on his legs for an hour, proposes to introduce his seventhly, there is a timid cry of “‘Vide ! ‘Vide ! ‘Vide !’” The change

in Parliamentary habit and modes of thought is shown by the fact that the interruption is instantly met by a stern cry of "Order! Order!" in which, if the interruption be persisted in, the Speaker is sure to join. Not that the audience desire to have more of the eloquence from which they have suffered. But it is not, in these days, the fashion to shout down an obnoxious member.

Mr. Courtney remembers when things were quite otherwise. There was a Wednesday afternoon in June, in the Session of 1877, when the Woman's Suffrage Bill made one of its successive appearances. ^{Talked out} ^{his own Bill.} The advocates of the measure—foremost among whom was Mr. Courtney—were flushed with hope of a good division. At a quarter past five, the champion rose to clench the argument in favour of the second reading. Under the standing orders then in force, Wednesday's debate must needs close at a quarter to six. If any member was on his feet when the hand of the clock touched the quarter, the debate would automatically stand adjourned. The House had had enough of debate carried on through a long summer afternoon. Members knew Mr. Courtney's views on the question, and would rather have the division than enjoy opportunity of hearing them formally restated. Accordingly, when he rose there were cries for the division.

But Mr. Courtney, though then comparatively new to Parliamentary life, was not to be put down by clamour. Disregarding the interruption, he went on with his remarks. As he continued the storm rose. Mr. Courtney's back was up, and occasionally so also was his clenched fist, ^{MR. COURTNEY'S BACK UP.} shaken towards high Heaven in enforcement of his argument. At the end of a quarter of an hour a glass of water was

brought by a considerate friend. Amid howls of contumely the orator gulped it down. Evidently refreshed, he began again. Nothing was heard beyond the invocation, "Mr. Speaker," and the chorus, "'Vide! 'Vide! 'Vide!'" The roar of human voices filled the Chamber with angry wail. When it seemed dying away Mr. Courtney's lips moved, whereat the blast broke forth with renewed fury. Another glass of water was brought, and drunk amid demoniac shouts.

So the moments sped till a quarter to six rang out from the Clock Tower, and Mr. Courtney sat down pale and breathless, secure in the rare triumph of having talked out the Bill whose passage through a second reading he had risen with intent to enforce. That is a scene the like of which members of the House of Commons living under the New Rules will never more look upon.

A well-known member of the House of Commons has brought up from the country a story which illustrates the responsibilities of hospitality. His house standing in an isolated position, with the highway skirting the park walls, he became concerned for the safety of many precious portable things collected under his roof. Taking advice in an experienced quarter, he was advised that the best thing to do was to have all the doors and windows on the ground-floor connected with electric bells. Any attempt to effect burglarious entry would result, not only in the ringing of the bell in the particular room upon which attempt was made, but in every room and every passage on the ground-floor.

Shortly after midnight on what had been a peaceful Sabbath, the household were alarmed by a furious ringing of bells. The householder was up with delighted alacrity. Now he would have them! On the way downstairs he met several men of the house party, for the most part scantily dressed, but full of ardour for any possible fray.

As the bells were still ringing in all the rooms, it was difficult to hit upon the one assailed. The host was assisted by the appearance at one of the doors of an esteemed friend

with painfully scared look. Explanations following, it appeared that the guest, fancying the room was warm, and being accustomed to sleep at home with his window open, unfastened the latch and threw up the window, with the astounding results recorded.

In future, guests sleeping on the ground-floor will be warned of what they may expect as the result of too insistent search of fresh night air.

CHAPTER III

FEBRUARY

IT is probable that amongst other results the new procedure governing Committee of Supply will settle the vexed question of the time of the year through which Parliament should sit. It has long been regarded as an unpardonable and unnecessary anomaly that Parliament should be condemned to hard labour in London through the fairest months of the year. Since the birth of organised obstruction in the Parliament of 1874, it has come to pass that members of the House of Commons have been practically debarred from enjoying the delights of the country in its prime. The custom has been to meet the first week in February, adjourning somewhere between the third week in August and the last week in September.

This arrangement of Parliamentary times and seasons is not consecrated by the dust of ages. It does not go even as far back as the Georgian Era. When George III. was King, Parliament met in November, sat till May or June, and thus earned a recess endowed with the warmth and light of summer time. As we are reminded by recurrence of the anniversary of Gunpowder Plot, the custom of Parliament meeting for a new Session early in November dates back beyond Stuart times. Seven years ago, Sir George Trevelyan made an attempt to induce the House to return to old Conservative customs. He moved a resolution recommending that the Session should open in November, that the

House should adjourn for brief recess at Christmas, and not sit far into June. The proposal was negatived by a bare majority of four in a House of over 350 members.

Mr. W. H. Smith, then leading the Commons, was so impressed by this declaration of opinion, that it was resolved to try the experiment. Accordingly, in 1890, the Session commenced on the 25th of November. Parliament sat till the 9th of December, and adjourned till the 22nd of January. It was a rather long Christmas holiday, and it had to be paid for later on, the prorogation not being brought about till the 5th of August.

This was an arrangement fatal to a movement that had commenced with sprightly hope. When members were brought to town in November, they were promised that school should break up on or about Midsummer Day. What actually happened was that the prorogation took place about the date which was, prior to 1874, regarded as customary, the difference being that members had been in harness since November instead of meeting in February.

Since that lamentable fiasco, there has been no further talk of winter sessions and summer holidays. Mr. Balfour's scheme of appointing a limited number of nights Mr. Balfour's
Plan. for Committee of Supply, backed up at the end by the Closure, will certainly—assuming good faith on the part of the Ministry—prevent the indefinite dragging out of the Session through August into September.¹ In spite of all temptation, turning a deaf ear to the entreaty of powerful interests, Mr. Balfour last year kept faith with the House of Commons. The prorogation took place about the middle of August, as he had promised when, early in the Session, he appropriated the time of private members for Committee of Supply. As long as honourable understanding in this direction is observed, so long will the new procedure in the matter of Committee of Supply be adhered to. It admirably serves the larger purpose for which it was designed, discussion of the Estimates being made possible last year with a

¹ This anticipation has been fully justified. Parliament is now invariably prorogued in the second week in August.

fulness of time and convenience of opportunity long unknown at Westminster.

The General Election of 1895 added to the historic store of the House of Commons one fresh opportunity of testing the problem whether there is insuperable obstacle to the Parliamentary success of a man who has made his earliest fame in literature. It was a fortunate accident, full of good augury, that Mr. Lecky's much-looked for maiden speech was delivered with-

*Men of
Letters in
Parliament.*

out preparation. He chanced to be in the House when, on the Address, debate arose on the question of extending amnesty to the Fenian prisoners. He was moved by some remarks from Mr. Horace Plunkett, one of those simple, businesslike addresses with which the member for Dublin County occasionally varies the ordinary business of speech-making in the House of Commons. Mr. Lecky, finding himself on his feet for the first time, going through the dread ordeal of speaking in the House of Commons, was manifestly nervous. He wrung his hands with despairing gesture; his knees, trembling, lent the appearance of a series of deprecatory curtsies towards the Chair. Soon he recovered his self-possession, and proceeded to the end of a wisely brief speech delivered in a pleasant voice with

*MR. LECKIE'S MAIDEN
EFFORT.*

clear enunciation. He doubtless did much better than if, foreseeing the opportunity, he had in the retirement and leisure of his study prepared a more elaborate oration.

Another man of letters, not brought in with the present Parliament, though in it he has made his first distinct bid for position as a debater, is Mr. Augustine Birrell. The member for West Fife undoubtedly prepares the good things

he distributes through his Parliamentary speeches. But their

“Obiter
Dicta.” point, and the happily natural manner of their delivery, invest them with the charm of the impromptu. The very best style of Parliamentary speaking is that illustrated by the successes of Lord Salisbury and Lord Rosebery, where the gift of public speaking is founded upon literary taste and literary training. Mr. Birrell has the combination of these good things. When, as in his case, there is added a strong savour of sprightly, occasionally audacious, humour, success is assured far beyond the measure that awaits the weightier and more distinguished historian of *England in the Eighteenth Century*.

MR. AUGUSTINE BIRRELL'S
“OBITER DICTA.”

One of the most elaborate and, by the public, least used underground avenues in the Metropolis connects Palace Yard with the Embankment. It is probable Subterranean Influences. that of the hundreds of thousands of persons who cross Westminster Bridge in the course of twenty-four hours, not a dozen are aware of the existence of this subterranean thoroughfare. As a matter of fact, it is reserved exclusively for members and others proceeding to and from the House of Commons. It is open only whilst the House is sitting, the approach from the Embankment and the exit at the foot of the District Railway steps being locked as soon as the House is up.

The passage has a remarkable history, inasmuch as it is the result of the only occasion when a bribe was effectively offered to a Select Committee of the House of Commons. When the promoters of the Metropolitan District Railway came before Parliament for powers to construct the line, they were careful to point out that one of their stations would be conveniently set immediately opposite the Clock-

tower Entrance to the Houses of Parliament. Also, there would be late trains going westward, which in ordinary circumstances would meet the convenience of members at the close of debate. Finally, the promoters undertook to connect Palace Yard and their railway station by a private subterraneous way.

That, of course, may have had no influence upon the decision of the Committee. As a matter of history the Bill passed.

There is just now on foot a movement, in which Mr. Loder takes the lead, for extending this privilege of subterraneous locomotion. Thanks to the activity and persistence of Mr. Herbert Gladstone, and the cordial concurrence of Mr. Akers-Douglas on succeeding him at the Board of Works, the long-contemplated improvement of the Parliament Street approach to Westminster Hall and Westminster Abbey will shortly be commenced. The unsightly block of houses which makes a sort of club-foot at the end of Parliament Street will be swept away, full view being opened of Westminster Abbey.

Where
Edmund
Spenser lived.

The narrow thoroughfare, King Street, at the back of this block was one time the principal approach to Westminster. There is record of the crushing and trampling to death of a number of people crowding it when Queen Elizabeth, at the head of a cavalcade of her nobles, rode to Westminster to open Parliament in person. To-day the broadened thoroughfare of Parliament Street is not wide enough to hold the throng that gathers on the rare occasions when the Sovereign opens Parliament.

Soon it will be further widened by addition of the back street in which Edmund Spenser died for lack of bread. It was in a room of a house in King Street that the author of *Faerie Queene* received the tardy charity of twenty pieces of silver sent him by Lord Essex. He returned it with bitterly courteous expression of regret that he had "no time to spend them."

Mr. Loder discovers in the contemplated improvement of Parliament Street an opportunity of adding to the com-

fort and convenience of Ministers and officials. He suggests that from somewhere in the neighbourhood of Downing Street a subway may start, landing in Palace Yard. As the money in this instance would be forthcoming not from the purse of a railway company, but from the coffers of the State, it is not probable the scheme will meet with the warm approval bestowed upon the passage under Bridge Street. Moreover, objection may reasonably be taken on behalf of the Man in the Street. During Mr. Gladstone's Premiership it was the daily delight of a crowd lining Downing Street, and of another clustered opposite the gates of Palace Yard, to await the coming of the veteran statesman. Had he, enticed by the privacy and shelter of the subway, gone underground, much innocent pleasure and excitement would have been lost. Nor would the public to-day willingly let die the opportunity of seeing Mr. Arthur Balfour, with long, swinging stride, and a pleasant smile on his still boyish face, pass daily through the Session on his way to the House of Commons.

In the published letters of the late Archbishop Magee there are several indications, scratched by a ruthlessly sharp pen, of the heartburning that underlies the ordinary placid appearance of the House of Lords. I am thoroughly sick of episcopal life in Parliament," moans Dr. Magee, after he had sat in it for ten years as Bishop of Peterborough. "We are hated by the Peers as a set of *parvenus* whom they would gladly rid themselves of if they dare, and only allowed on sufferance to speak now and then on Church questions after a timid and respectful sort."

**Parvenu
Peers in
Parliament.**

Dr. Magee addressing any body of his fellow-creatures in timid and respectful attitude does not immediately jump with conclusions formed in reminiscence of his ordinary manner. The suggestion shows how deeply he was moved.

Differences in custom of debate tend to make things harder for an undesirable speaker in the House of Lords than for one similarly esteemed in the House of Commons.

**Debate in Lords
and Commons.**

On big field-nights, such as the second reading of the Home Rule Bill or the Irish Land Bill, the list of speakers on one side, and the order of their appearance, is drawn up by Lord Salisbury, a similar list being prepared by the Leader of the party opposite. These lists serve as stone walls against the desire of any Lord of Parliament who may desire to enjoy his birthright by addressing his peers.

In the debate on the second reading of the Irish Land Bill, passed by Lord Salis-
bury's Government, an *An Undelivered Speech.*

LORD MORRIS.

Irish Law Lord¹ who knows the question thoroughly, and whose racy speech is much relished by the House and the public, regarded it as a matter of course that he would be expected to take part in the debate. He was, accordingly, at some pains to prepare a speech presumably full of good things. Inquiring where he was to come in, he was quietly told that he would not be wanted.

"So," he says, with a twinkle in his eye and a richer note in his brogue, "I'm saving this speech up for the next Irish Land Bill a Conservative Government will bring in."

THE LATE LORD COLERIDGE.

It seems natural enough that a clergyman, albeit an archbishop, projected

¹ The late Lord Morris.

into the political arena, should be possessed with that feeling of chilliness in the atmosphere of the House of Lords which Dr. Magee indicates in the passage quoted. It affects even lawyers. A short time before his death the first Lord Coleridge, talking to me about the House of Lords, said: "I have had my seat there now for more than a dozen years. But when at this day I rise to speak I have something of the feeling that chilled me at my first essay. Making a set speech in the House of Lords is like getting up in a churchyard and addressing the tombstones."

A Cheerful
Simile.

The prospect of Lord Charles Beresford returning to the House of Commons, a happy event not likely to be long deferred, flutters the Admiralty with pleased anticipation. As seen from Whitehall, it is doubtful whether Lord Charles, being in Parliament, is better in office or out of it. Out of it he is always cruising round, continually threatening to run down the First Lords' frigate with his saucy gunboat. In office he is not any more tractable.

He tells a charming story of what happened to him "when I was at the Admiralty."

"One morning," Lord Charles says, "a clerk came in with a wet quill pen, and said: 'Good-morning. Will you sign the Estimates of the year?' I said: 'What!' He said: 'Will you sign the Estimates for the year?' "I SHA'N'T SIGN THE ESTIMATES." I said: 'My good man, I have not seen them.' 'Oh, well,' he said, shoving a little astern, 'the other Lords have signed them. It will be very

inconvenient if you don't.' 'I'm very sorry,' I said. 'I'm afraid I'm altogether inconvenient in this place. Certainly I sha'n't sign Estimates I've not seen.' 'I must go and tell the First Lord,' said the horrified clerk. I assured him I didn't care a fig whom he told. Being at the time the Coal Lord, I knew the coal was not half enough to supply the fleet as it stood, and the fleet wasn't near enough the strength it ought to be. So I flatly refused to sign, and the Estimates were brought into the House without my signature. The omission was noted and an explanation demanded. 'Really,' said the First Lord, 'it does not matter whether the Junior Lord signs the Estimates or does not.'"

Mr. Sydney Gedge has thought out a means of saving public time in the House of Commons, which he will, in the course of the coming Session, invite the House to embody in a Standing Order. It is aimed against the practice of a few recalcitrant members insisting upon dividing when their chances of prevailing in the lobby are ludicrously hopeless.

This is an opportunity not lost upon obstructionists, who when they tire of talking have only to challenge a division, which secures for them a little wholesome exercise, combined with a waste of ten minutes of public time.

Mr. Gedge proposes that the Speaker, or if the House is in Committee, the Chairman, may, after putting the question a second time and finding his opinion challenged, call for a show of hands. He may thereupon declare whether the "ayes" or "noes" have it, his decision to be final. In order to gratify the desire of members to see their names in the division list, Mr. Gedge further proposes that members may write their names, with the word "aye" or "no," on a card provided for the purpose, and deposit it in a box, the votes so signified to be printed in the division list.

There is already in existence a Standing Order designed to effect the purpose Mr. Gedge has at heart. In accordance with it, the Speaker, or Chairman of Committees,

regarding a division as frivolously claimed, may direct those clamouring for it to stand up in their places.

The Committee clerks are summoned; the names of members on their feet are ticked off, and are printed with the votes on the following day. Forestalled.

Once last Session Mr. Weir succeeded in provoking the Chairman of Committees to put in force the Standing Order. In Committee of Supply he, lamenting the slack attendance of Her Majesty's ships in the neighbourhood of the Hebrides, moved to reduce Mr. Goschen's salary by the sum of £1500. The Chairman, putting the question, declared the "noes" had it. Mr. Weir insisted on the contrary, and claimed a division. Thereupon, the Chairman directed the "ayes" to stand up. Nine members, including Mr. Caldwell and Dr. Tanner, supported Mr. Weir.

It was a significant circumstance that on the next vote Dr. Tanner made a motion at least as frivolous. But the Chairman did not again have recourse to the Standing Order. In the division that followed the minority was eight. Whence it would appear that the challenge for a division was one-ninth more frivolous than the one upon which the Chairman had taken action.

The most delightful incident in the evolution of new members of the present Parliament stands to the credit of a member who sits above the gangway on the Opposition benches. Very early after taking the oath he resolved to make his maiden speech. Impressed with the respect due to the Mother of Parliaments, he considered what he should do in order properly to render it. Discussing with himself various suggestions, he finally resolved that before he rose to catch the Speaker's eye he would have his hair curled. Hair-curled
Oratory.

One afternoon, to the astonishment of members in his immediate neighbourhood, he came down oiled and curled like an Assyrian bull. Unfortunately, the delicate attention he had paid to the House was not reciprocated by the Speaker. Up to dinner time, whenever a member taking

part in the debate resumed his seat, a curled head was seen flashing up above the gangway, and a voice issuing from below the fringe said, "Mr. Speaker!" But the owner was persistently ignored.

Wearied by reiterated effort and continual disappointment, he went out about the dinner hour to get some refreshment. He was back early in fresh quest of opportunity. But, even in the more favourable circumstances of lessened attendance and reduced competition, he did not get his chance. New members have a prescriptive right to precedence over all but the giants of debate. On this occasion new members seemed, with one accord, to have agreed to seize the opportunity.

It was eleven o'clock before the member above the gangway was called upon, by which time, partly owing to the heat of the atmosphere, partly to extreme mental perturbation, his hair was almost entirely out of curl. But the

attention was well meant, and was much appreciated by members who in the course of the evening possessed themselves of the secret.

It was another new member, fresh from Ireland, who, in the heat of ^{A New Word.} oratory, flashed forth a new and delightfully expressive word. Mr. Gerald Balfour declined to assent to one of the many proposals formulated by rival factions below the gangway opposite.

"GERALD."

"Sir," said Mr. Murnaghan, fixing the Minister with flaming eye, "I can tell the Chief Secretary that his message will be received in Ireland with *constirpation*."

I have happened upon a rare pamphlet whose well-thumbed condition testifies to the interest it has excited. *A Short History of Prime Ministers in Great Britain* is its title, the imprint showing that it was "done by H. Haines, at Mr. Francklin's, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, 1733." A Fearful Warning.

The history, much condensed, is designed to show how fatal for a nation's welfare is the delegation of kingly rule to the hands of a single man. The anonymous writer goes as far back as the time of William the Conqueror with his favourite Minister, Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, and passing through succeeding reigns, shows how A'Beckett, Hubert de Burgh, Mortimer, Somerset, Buckingham, and others placed in supreme power by the personal affection of the Sovereign, brought their country to the verge of ruin.

The gem of the work is reserved for the end, where the author, summarising the history of Prime Ministers, shows how fearsome was their fate. Here is his list made out in the fashion of a butcher's weekly account for meat:—

DY'D by the Halter	3
Ditto by the Axe	10
Ditto by STURDY BEGGARS	3
Ditto untimely by private Hands	2
Ditto in Imprisonment	4
Ditto in Exile	4
Ditto Penitent	1
Saved by Sacrificing their Master	4
<hr/>	
Sum Total of PRIME MINISTERS	31

Like Captain Bunsby's remarks, the bearing of the pamphleteer's observations lies in the application thereof. Only one reference is made to current politics. "It would scarce have been safe," he writes, "I am sure it would not have been prudent, thus to entertain the Publick with the dismal Consequences, that have hitherto followed, upon vesting all Power in *One Man*. But at a Time like *This*, when it is the joy of all good Men to see that there is no one *Prime Minister* at the Helm; but that several *equally*

able, equally virtuous, and great Men jointly draw on the *well-ballanced Machine of State*, which therefore cannot, as I pray it may not, totter."

The wicked slyness of the pamphleteer is realised when we recall the fact that at the time he launched his artfully prepared dart, Sir Robert Walpole was first Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, had held the position for twelve years, and seemed likely, as indeed the event proved, to retain it for nine years longer.

CHAPTER IV

MARCH

IN this, its third Session, it becomes more than ever clear that the Fourteenth Parliament of Queen Victoria will not vary the level of respectable commonplace prevalent in the House of Commons in recent times. As far as individuality is concerned, the Parliament of 1874-80 marks the high tide. That was the assembly that provided a platform on which were played the high jinks of Major O'Gorman, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Frank Hugh O'Donnell, Dr. Kenealy, Sir John Astley, Mr. Tom Connelly, Mr. David Davies, Mr. Delahunty, with his one-pound notes; Mr. M'Carthy Downing, Mr. Plimsoll, and his famous achievement of standing on one leg and shaking his fist at the Speaker; Sir John Elphinstone, Mr. David M'Iver, honest John Martin, the Chevalier O'Clery, J. P. Ronayne, one of the wittiest of Irishmen; Dr. O'Leary, Captain Stackpoole, Mr. Smollett, great-grand-nephew of the novelist and historian, who effectively reproduced in the House the manners of Humphrey Clinker; Mr. Whalley, with his grave suspicion of Mr. Newdegate, whom he once accused of being a Jesuit in disguise; Mr. Newdegate, with his funereal voice, his solemn manner, and his pocket-handkerchief of the hue of the Scarlet Lady whose existence disturbed his hours sleeping or waking—all these lived in the Parliament of 1874-80. All, all are gone, and there is none to take their place.

I see I have omitted the Admiral from the list, which

proves its abundant fulness. Yet, perhaps, of all the characters in that memorable Parliament, the Admiral was the most subtly humoristic. His proper style was Sir William Edmonstone, Bart., C.B., member for Stirlingshire. In the House he was never known by any other name than "the Admiral." Through the long Sessions of the '74 Parliament there was no more constant attendant than he, seated midway on the bench immediately behind Her Majesty's Ministers. Strangers in the gallery, attracted by certain growlings suggestive of limited allowance of rum in the forecastle, grew familiar with the spare figure, surmounted by a small head, from which the hand of Time had gently but firmly plucked the greater part of the hair. They knew and liked the thin, resolute face, with frail vestiges of whiskers, the mouth marked with lines telling of threescore years and ten.

In February 1874 the Admiral came in with a crowd of new members, absolutely an unknown man. Circumstances had not been favourable to the development of that political acumen later developed in remarkable degree. Afloat or ashore, he had served his Queen and his country full fifty years. It was not by any fault of his that the only time he smelt gunpowder fiercely fired was when, as a lad of sixteen, a midshipman on the *Sybille*, he came across some pirates in the Archipelago. Since then he was present at many desperate actions, chiefly taking place in the House of Commons. He saw right honourable pirates on the Front Bench opposite again and again attempt to board the Treasury Bench, he standing by and cheering whilst the bold Ben Dizzy beat them off.

There were many things misty to his mind. One he could not comprehend was the perversity that led a member of the House, in whatsoever quarter he might be seated, to challenge a decision on the part of even a subordinate member of the Administration. Sir William Harcourt used to take great delight in "drawing" the Admiral. This was not a difficult thing to accomplish. Express in plain terms the conviction that the Government

had blundered ; say that a particular Minister had done something he ought not to have done, or left undone that which he should have done. Thereupon the House, wickedly watching for the consequence, beheld the Admiral, hitherto quiescent, begin to move as a river-boat rocks when caught in the swell of a passing steamer. He tossed petulantly from side to side, thrust one hand deep in his trouser pocket, brushed with the other his scanty locks, as he rested his elbow on the back of the bench. Finally, seizing a copy of the Orders of the Day, his lips angrily pursed, his brow black as thunder, he began furiously to fan himself.

If the attack proceeded, he indulged in a series of tumultuous coughs ; at first eloquently expostulatory, then indignantly denunciatory, finally hopelessly despairing.

Early in the career of the Parnellites the Admiral devoted much attention to them. For him, as for his esteemed leaders, they proved too much. During the Session of 1877, when organised obstruction was in full play, the Admiral was known to cough himself hoarse, and in a single night to use up, in the process of fanning himself, five copies of the Orders abstracted from unconscious members sitting near him. Mr. Parnell went on as had been his wont. Mr. Biggar took no note of the frantic semaphore signals made in his direction. Mr. O'Donnell blankly regarded the irate old gentleman with the added aggravation of an eye-glass.

In the course of time the Admiral accepted the Parnellites with the sort of pained resignation with which a man submits to untoward climatic phenomena. When one of them rose to speak, the gallant old salt, with a low groan, turned his face to the wall. Only an occasional tremor of the nervously folded Orders showed he was listening and in pain. The Admiral passed away with the Disraelian Parliament, and his type we shall never see more at Westminster.

When the election of 1880 put Mr. Gladstone in power, the Parnellites, to the dismay and openly expressed disgust of the Conservative nobility and gentry, resolved to stay

where they had been quartered when Parliament was dissolved. They were in full exercise of their **The Irish Quarter.** right ; and, accordingly, country squires, sons of peers, University men, and wealthy manufacturers crossing over to the Opposition benches had to grin and bear the company of Mr. Biggar, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Finnigan, and the rest.

There was no pride about Lord Randolph Churchill, and, when he established himself in the leadership of the Fourth Party, he found the contiguity of the Parnellites highly convenient. He and they were joined in the yoke of common enmity to Mr. Gladstone and all his works. In those days, the Irish Nationalist member was in the House of Commons regarded in a light difficult for a younger generation to realise. He was a sort of political leper, with whom no man would associate. Quite a sensation was created when, from time to time, Lord Randolph Churchill was seen to turn round and converse with Mr. Healy or Mr. O'Donnell, who usually sat immediately behind his corner post.

All that is changed now. Old members have even grown accustomed to Irish members being referred to by **A Cuckoo In a Dove's Nest.** Ministers and ex-Ministers as "my hon. and learned friend." (Note.—Nearly all Irish Nationalist members have been called to the Bar.) Nevertheless when, in the first week parties settled down in the House of Commons elected in 1892, Mr. Willie Redmond was discovered seated on the fourth bench above the gangway on the Opposition side, something like a shudder ran through the Conservative host. That is the quarter of the House where, when the Conservatives are in Opposition, the flower of the Squirearchy blooms. To indicate its precise bearing, it suffices to say that the bench Mr. Redmond marked for his own was the very one frequented by Sir Walter Barttelot when his side were in Opposition.

For Redmond Minor, above all Irish members, to plant himself out there was a procedure relieved only from the charge of effrontery by suspicion of a joke. There was no

use trying to forestall him. Patriot squires banded themselves together. taking

1

"WHO KILLED PARNELL?"

when the Conserva-
tives are in Opposi-

A Bootless
Errand.

tion, recalls the company of another Irish member of

eccentric habits. This was Mr. X., who, some thirty years ago, represented a borough constituency. He made his fortune at the auctioneer's rostrum, and when he took to politics, he shrewdly threw in his lot with what in later times have been called "the gentlemen of England." The Conservatives were then in power, and X., as a faithful follower of Lord Derby, a moneyed man withal, sat on the fourth bench behind Ministers.

He had acquired an odd habit of slipping off his boots as a preliminary to going to sleep over an argument. The sight, occasionally something more, of a pair of stockinged feet greatly irritated his neighbours. They dropped many hints of their preference for boots. But, more especially in hot weather, X. never failed to kick off his boots as a preliminary to settling down to close attention to debate.

One night he was in this condition when a division was challenged. A happy thought struck an honourable and long-suffering member who sat near him. Taking the brogues gingerly between finger and thumb, he passed out behind the Speaker's Chair, hiding the things under one of the benches at the back of the Chair.

X., thoroughly comfortable about the feet, slept on whilst the question was put, and did not even awake when the Speaker called "Ayes to the right, noes to the left." The bustle of the parting hosts at length aroused him. The House was evidently dividing. He had not the slightest idea what it was about. It was of small consequence, as the Whip would show him into which lobby he should walk. Easy on that score, he felt for his boots, and, lo! they were not. He got down on his knees, peered all along under the bench, but, like the Spanish Fleet, they were not yet in sight.

The House was now nearly empty. The Speaker was regarding his movements with grave attention. The Whips at the doorway were impatiently signalling. There was only one thing to be done, and X. did it. He went forth and voted in his stockinged feet.

The old member recalls yet another story about X.

When he came forward in the Conservative interest, the Lord Lieutenant of the day did everything that one in his position might do discreetly to assist the candidate. When X. won the seat, and called to pay his respects at the Viceregal Lodge, His Excellency jocularly remarked that the new member owed much to him, and that he really deserved some reward. X. was delighted. Touching the Lord Lieutenant lightly in the ribs, he whispered in his ear—

“Certainly, my lord. I won’t forget. There’s a neat little bracelet in gold at the disposal of her ladyship.”

It was not without some difficulty that the alarmed Lord Lieutenant succeeded in averting the consequences of his little joke.

The British public, long familiar with Sir John Tenniel’s weekly cartoon in *Punch*, are not aware that this master in black and white at the outset of his career worked in colours. Nearly half a century ago he entered into competition for engagement to contribute to the frescoes on the walls of the then new Houses of Parliament. He was selected, together with Mr. Maclise, Mr. Herbert, Mr. Horsley, and Mr. Dyce, who have since all achieved the position of R.A.

Sir John
Tenniel’s
earliest Cartoon.

In this respect, and in one other much more satisfactory, Sir John Tenniel stands in a position of splendid isolation. Very shortly after the frescoes were completed, the paintings began to disappear. As early as 1863, nine years after the completion of the work in the upper Waiting-Hall, the Fine Arts Commission reported the paintings to be partially disappearing. Since then decay has spread, till, at the present day, some of the panels are blank save for suspicion of a smudge to be detected under a strong light. The one exception to the common lot is Tenniel’s fresco of “St. Cecilia,” to be found on the staircase leading down from the Committee-room corridor to the central lobby.

For some years patient and well-directed effort has been made to restore the other frescoes, but without effect. “St.

Cecilia," on the contrary, having been dusted and cleaned with bread, was found to be in a fair state of preservation. It has lately received two coats of a paraffin wax solution invented by Professor Church, and all that is now wanted is a fairly good light in which it might be seen.

The secret of this rare triumph is found, as in the case of other and older Masters, in the preparation and manipulation of colours. When the stripling Tenniel came to his work in 1849 it occurred to him that the best way to confront the peculiar difficulties of the case was to paint very thinly without impasto. In fact, he hardly did more than stain with his colours the white ground of the wall. Yet this is the one that has lasted, whilst Mr. Herbert's fresco, Mr. Horsley's, and the rest, handled with fuller grip, certainly with more colour, have vanished, leaving scarce a tone of colour behind.

There is, Professor Church says, no parallel to this case of a pure fresco which, for nearly half a century, has successfully resisted the influence of the London atmosphere, more especially as it is developed in contiguity to the Thames.

Considering how keen is the interest excited by Parliamentary proceedings, how high

political feeling occasionally runs, it is remarkable how rare are the interruptions to debate by strangers indulging even in an ejaculation. The most common outbreak from the Strangers' Gallery takes

A TERRIBLE OFFENCE.

the form of clapping hands. Some village Hampden on a visit to town, making his way to the Strangers' Gallery of

the House of Commons, listening entranced to an impassioned speech, gives vent to his feelings in the ordinary way by clapping his hands. That is what is usually done in similar circumstances at meetings in the country he is accustomed to attend. Why it should be different in the House of Commons he does not at the moment realise. Full opportunity for thinking the matter over is invariably provided, he being summarily led forth

NOTICE TO QUIT.

by the attendant and conducted to the door of the outer lobby.

The funniest disorderly interruption to debate I ever heard in the House of Commons passed undetected by the

A Voice from
the Press
Gallery.

authorities. At the time, some years back, there was still in the Press Gallery a very old member. He had, in fact, been in the gallery so long, had heard so many speeches, seen so many processions of members coming and going, that familiarity justified its proverbial conse-

quiction.

quence of breeding contempt. Perhaps of all members of

the House, the one J. had the most rooted dislike for was Mr. Gladstone. This was partly based on political grounds, J. being from birth and associations a high old Tory of the Church-and-State kind. The objection was possibly nurtured by the fact that Mr. Gladstone was a voluminous speaker, whom it was necessary to report fully, and when, towards midnight, a man got a ten-minute or quarter-of-an-hour "turn" of the orator, it meant unduly prolonged labour.

Next to Mr. Gladstone, J. mostly disliked his own misguided countrymen, the Irish Nationalist members. As it was not always necessary to report what they said, he had the opportunity of listening, and was accustomed to growl out a commentary upon their speeches. One night, after dinner, Mr. Sexton introduced into his discourse a statement that particularly irritated J.

"No, no," he cried, in audible voice, shaking his head reprovably at the member for Sligo.

Standing in his accustomed place below the gangway, at the other end of the House, Mr. Sexton distinctly heard the contradiction.

"An honourable member above the gangway," he observed, "says, 'No, no.'"

Members in the quarter addressed protested that they had not spoken, but Mr. Sexton had heard the contradiction, and in an aside of some length demonstrated its ineptitude.

J. was remarkably silent for the rest of his turn.

It was not he, but a venerable and esteemed colleague on the same paper, who, at the end of a quarter of an hour's "turn," during which reporters to right and left of him had been taking verbatim note of an important speech by Mr. Gladstone, was accustomed to bend over to his neighbour and in a hoarse whisper inquire, "What line is he taking?"

The other day I saw treasured in a private library what is perhaps the earliest collection of Parliamentary speeches. They were delivered by Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, father of the more famous Francis Lord Verulam, and were spoken in successive Parlia-

ments. The addresses are written out on parchment that has withstood the wear and tear of more than three centuries. Half-way down one of the speeches is a break marked by this note: ^{An ancient Parliamentary Practice.} "Hereafter followeth that I intended to have saide, if I had not byn countermaunded."

Here is consolatory suggestion for Parliament men in a reign that has lasted longer than Queen Elizabeth's. In Mr. Courtney's case, mentioned on an earlier page (when on a Wednesday afternoon he talked out a Woman's Rights Bill he had risen to support), had he been aware of the precedent, and disposed to follow it, he might have averted calamity to the measure in which he took such generous interest. Had he been content to discontinue his prepared speech at the point where interruption grew boisterous he might, on the next morning, have pasted in a book of pleasant reference whatever measure of report the newspapers gave. Then, with the prefatory note, "Hereafter followeth what I intended to have said if I had not been countermanded," might appear at length the precious apothegms whose delivery was checked by the noise of inconsiderate persons wearying to get home.

In the recently published Life of Philip Duke of Wharton there leaps to light a record usefully illustrating the standard of morality in those "good old" Parliamentary times, whose lapse we occasionally hear deplored. ^{Ducal Duplicity.} When Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, was arraigned on a charge of treasonable conspiracy against good King George, Wharton espoused his cause and undertook the task of defending him before the House of Lords. When the indictment had proceeded a certain length, the Bishop's friends became anxious to know whether all had been alleged, or whether the representatives of the Crown had any cards up their sleeve. Wharton undertook to find out. He called upon Sir Robert Walpole, at the Prime Minister's residence in Chelsea, and protested his poignant regret at having hitherto adopted a line of conduct distasteful to the

King and hurtful to his faithful Minister. By way of atonement he now offered to join in the denunciation of Atterbury, and begged the Premier to coach him up on the subject of the Bishop's guilt.

Walpole, delighted to secure so important a recruit on the Ministerial side, told him everything. Next day the Duke appeared in his place in the House of Lords, and with a thorough knowledge of the strong and weak points of the prosecution upon which the Premier had dilated for his instruction, he delivered a powerful speech in favour of the Bishop!

It is happily impossible to parallel this achievement from modern Parliamentary records. The nearest approach to it, **Lord Elcho in two Pieces.** far removed from its slippery footing, was Lord Elcho's double dealing with the Derby Day. In the Session of 1890 he, in a speech that disclosed a real humorist, moved the adjournment of the House over the Derby Day. Two years later, in a discourse equally witty and not less convincing, he seconded an amendment by Sir Wilfrid Lawson traversing the proposal that the House should make holiday on account of the race on Epsom Downs.

That is obviously a very different thing from the deliberate turpitude of the Georgian Duke. It marks the higher standard of morality which governs Parliamentary life of to-day that the House of Commons was vaguely shocked, being only partially reassured by suspicion that it was all a joke. There may be no connection between the events, but it is certain that on the following day, the House having resolved to sit in spite of the Derby, no quorum was forthcoming, and within three weeks Parliament was dissolved.

No unalterable rule orders the location of a Cabinet Council. Through the Parliamentary Session it not infrequently happens that a consultation of Cabinet **Cabinet Councils.** Ministers is summoned upon some news of the moment, and meets in the room of the First Lord of the

Treasury. It is not formally called a Cabinet Council, nor is it so recorded, with the list of Ministers present, in the papers of the next day. But it is really the same thing, and occasionally leads to exceptionally important conclusions.

In the ordinary course of events, Cabinet Councils are held in a large room on the first floor of the official residence of the First Lord of the Treasury in Downing Street. It was from this room that on a historic occasion, whilst awaiting a critical message from Constantinople, Mr. Gladstone's colleagues in his second Administration adjourned to the scanty walled-garden at the back of No. 10 Downing Street. A Government clerk chancing, in the rare leisure of a day's work, to look out of the window, happened upon the scene and sketched it, showing Lord Granville seated at a small table playing chess with a colleague, whilst the momentous message still tarried on the wires.

The room in which the Cabinet Council sit is plainly furnished, something after the style of the dining-room in a well-to-do boarding-house in the neighbourhood of Russell Square. One notes the double windows, a precaution not necessary to exclude sound from without, for though in the heart of London, Downing Street is, back and front, one of its quietest dwelling-places. Possibly the device was adopted as final precaution against the escape of sounds from within.

There lingers round the Chamber a tradition of the Cabinets of 1868-74 which took much wear and tear out of the Council-room. There was, at that epoch, a hideous yellow blind attached to one of the windows. In the course of some remarks on the Irish Education Bill, which led to the Ministerial crisis of 1873, Mr. Gladstone, restlessly walking to and fro, tugged at the blind as he passed it, displacing the cord. The blind stuck fast half-way down on a painful slant. Mr. Disraeli, coming into power on the crest of the wave of the General Election of 1874, found the stranded yellow blind in precisely the position it had been left by Mr. Gladstone's undesigned effort. One of the weekly illustrated papers published in

July 1874 a sketch of the new Cabinet Council, which incidentally preserves the condition of the wrecked window-blind.

The daily newspapers are not backward in providing on the following morning outline sketches of events taking place within the jealously-guarded portals of the Cabinet Council. On the whole, having regard to accuracy, it is better to await the later appearance of letters and diaries, either of dead-and-gone Cabinet Ministers or of men intimately connected with Ministerial circles.

Horace Walpole gives a charming account of a Cabinet Council of two, held under the presidency of Pitt. The

Premier, A Cabinet Council of Two. who during the term of his office lived in Downing Street, was in bed with the gout, and had summoned to conference his colleague the Duke of Newcastle. It was a bitterly cold day, and Pitt, according to his custom, having no fire in his room, had bed-

"COLD, ISN'T IT, ARTHUR."

clothes piled upon him mountains high. This was all very well for the Premier, but rather hard on the Duke, who, as Walpole says, "was, as usual, afraid of catching cold." He first sat down on Mrs. Pitt's bed as the warmest place, then drew himself up into it as it got colder. The lecture continued a considerable time, and the Duke at length fairly lodged himself under Mrs. Pitt's bed-clothes.

"A person from whom I had the story," Walpole writes, "suddenly going in, saw the two Ministers in bed at two ends of the room, while Pitt's long nose and black beard, unshaven for days, added to the grotesque character of the scene."

The well-regulated mind refuses to contemplate an

analogous scene in Downing Street of to-day. The boldest imagination could not frame a picture calling up before the mind's eye Mr. Arthur Balfour in bed on one side of a room, whilst there peeped forth from beneath the coverlet of a couch at the other end of the chamber the *spirituel* countenance of the Lord Chancellor.

Horace Walpole, who knew his Plato, might, had

By Earlier he chanced
Besides. to think of it,

have recalled an earlier bedside confabulation.

It will be found in the Protagoras, giving an account of the visit of

"AWFULLY COLD."

Socrates, accompanied by his friend Hippocrates, to the house of Callias, with intent to make the acquaintance of three famous sophists, Protagoras of Abdera, Hippias of Elis, and Prodicus of Ceos. Socrates relates how he found Prodicus lying in, his bed-chamber, rolled up in heaps of blankets, his disciples planting themselves on neighbouring beds whilst they talked. So great was the crowd, Socrates could not get in, and from the thronged portal listened to the resonant voice of Prodicus laying down the law.

CHAPTER V

APRIL

THOSE familiar with Mr. Gladstone's position in the House of Commons during the last five years of his long life there, find it difficult to realise a state of things that earlier existed. The closing period was pretty

*Mr. Gladstone's
last Years in
the Commons.*

equally divided between the Opposition side and the Treasury Bench. In either case, with one memorable exception — when, amid the tumult of the scene that accompanied the closure of Committee on the Home Rule Bill, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett (shortly after knighted) sat on the Front Opposition Bench with hands on knees bellowing contumely at the veteran statesman — he was treated in both camps with reverent respect. Possibly members felt that the end was

"BELLOWING CONTUMELY."

not far off, that a career as memorable for its length as for greater achievements must soon close. Perhaps Mr. Gladstone was himself mellowed by advancing years and the deference paid to him. However it be, his appearance at the table, so far from being, as was once the case, the

occasion for jeers and angry interruptions, was the signal for the gathering of a great congregation, drinking in with delight the flow of stately eloquence.

In these sunnier circumstances Mr. Gladstone's mind may have reverted to earlier times when he suffered from quite other manners. There was one night in the springtime of the Session of 1878, when, as the Marquis of Salisbury, speaking in the Lords in January of this year, candidly admitted, Lord Beaconsfield and his Ministry were engaged in "putting their money on the wrong horse." (It was, of course, the money of the British taxpayer. But precision is often fatal to epigram.) The Jingo fever was at its height. Mr. Gladstone was carrying round the Fiery Cross, rousing popular enthusiasm that, in due time, swept the Conservative Government out of Downing Street. In the House of Commons, passion raged with rare turbulence.

Other Times,
other
Manners.

On the particular night referred to, Mr. Gladstone was returning to his seat, having voted against the Government on a side issue. Some of the gentlemen of England, perceiving his approach through the glass door of the "Aye" lobby, began to howl. The noise brought others to the spot, and there arose, echoing round the wondering and, at the moment, empty House of Commons, a yell of execration. Mr. Gladstone, startled at the sudden outburst, looked up, and saw a crowd of faces pressed against the glass door, mouths open, eyes gleaming with uncontrollable hate. He walked close up and steadfastly regarded the yelling mob. Then, without a word, he turned and pursued his way into the House.

This temper displayed in the High Court of Parliament was a reflex of the passion that filled the music-halls and similar places of public resort outside. A few days later a crowd assembled before Mr. Gladstone's private house and, or ever the police could be mustered, smashed his windows.

The Mob out
of doors.

Amongst his voluminous correspondence Mr. Gladstone probably preserves a roughly written scrawl enclosing a

post-office order for £3 : 10s., that being the sum at which, according to the newspapers, the damage to his house-front was assessed. The writer said he was a working man ; that he, his wife and family were so ashamed at reading how the great statesman's windows had been broken by a mob calling themselves British working men, that they had scraped

“HE STEADFASTLY REGARDED THE YELLING MOB.”

together money to repair the damage, and enclosed it herewith.

When, after the General Election of 1880, Mr. Gladstone returned to power, master of a mighty majority, the personal animosity displayed towards him in Conservative circles was, if possible, increased. It found many channels during the long course of the Bradlaugh controversy. Overworked, sometimes broken down in health, irritated with the constant dribbling of personal animosity calculated to wear away any stone, the Premier, by occasional outbreaks of temper, gave the enemy fresh cause to blaspheme.

There was a well-remembered scene when the Land Bill of 1881 was in Committee. The House had been cleared for a division. The bell clanged through all the corridors. Members who had not been present to listen to the arguments made up for the remissness by crowding in to vote. Suddenly, to the astonishment of every one, to the consternation of Dr. Playfair—under that style Chairman of Committees at the time—the Prime Minister was discovered standing at the table commencing a speech. In the circumstances of the moment that is a breach of order upon which it would seem impossible for the newest member to stumble. That the Leader of the House, a Parliamentarian of fifty years' experience, should thus fly in the face of the Standing Orders at first took away the breath of the Opposition. When regained, they used it to indulge in an angry roar, drowning the opening sentences of the Premier's remarks.

Nevertheless, he stood at the table, waiting till the tumult should subside. It is one of the quaint rules of debate in the Commons that when the House has been cleared for a division a member desiring to raise any point of order may speak, but he must needs do it seated with his hat on. Dr. Playfair rising to enforce this rule, Mr. Gladstone's Parliamentary instinct automatically asserted itself and he resumed his seat.

"Put on your hat!" shouted the Premier's friends.

Over Mr. Gladstone's sternly set angry face there flashed for a moment an amused smile. He gently shook his head. He knew, what the House had forgotten, that he never brought his hat on to the Treasury Bench. At this critical moment it was hung on a peg in his room behind the Speaker's Chair. When this difficulty dawned upon his colleagues, hats were

"DEXTEROUSLY BALANCING
THE HAT."

proffered from various sides. The nearest at hand was that

of Sir Farrer Herschell, then Solicitor-General. Mr. Gladstone took it, and tried to put it on. But it was one of his unlucky days. A new and fearsome difficulty presented itself. The hat was not nearly large enough. As the scene grew in tumult and time was precious, the Premier, dexterously balancing the hat on the crown of his head, said what he had to say, and the scene closed.

Perhaps Mr. Gladstone, in the better times that dawned at the close of his Parliamentary life, never thought of these things. He had a gift of forgetting personal affront, which stood him in good stead in the changing aspects of his political life. In this very Parliament of 1880-5, when Coercion Bills were passed, all-night sittings were as common as Wednesday afternoons, and Irish members were suspended in batches, the Premier was personally the object of that savage vituperation which, after the epoch of Committee Room No. 15, the Irish members turned upon each other.

"A vain old gentleman," Mr. Biggar once called him across the floor of the House. That was a mild adjuration compared with some of the personal abuse directed at him. In the Home Rule Parliament, I have several times heard Mr. Gladstone courteously allude to an Irish member still with us as "my hon. friend." He never dropped the phrase, accompanied with friendly look and courteous gesture, but there flashed on my mind the memory of this same member standing below the gangway, shaking his clenched fist at the author of the Irish Land Bill, roaring at him in that vocal form Mr. O'Connell was once permitted to call "beastly bellowing."

"WITH COURTEOUS GESTURE."

Mr. Bright, subjected to the same experience, threw up his long-time advocacy of the Irish Nationalist cause, and

became one of its most powerful enemies. Mr. Gladstone never, in any individual case, betrayed the slightest evidence of recollection of what had been. He had not only forgiven, but had apparently overcome the even greater difficulty of forgetting.

Now that Mr. Gladstone has withdrawn from the scene he so long graced, the last echo of the old personal resentment has died away. This state of things found pretty testimony in the movement which The Eton
Bust. marked the opening of the Session for placing a bust of him in the Upper School at Eton. Etonians of all shades of politics are found both in the Lords and Commons. Lord Rosebery, representing the Peers, Mr. Arthur Balfour, the former Eton boy who leads the Commons, joined hands in carrying into effect the happy thought.

Twenty years ago—fifteen years ago—no member of Parliament with reputation for ordinary sanity would have conceived such an idea. Had he got over that initial difficulty and promulgated his scheme, he would have been promptly hustled on one side. This Session subscriptions poured in, old Etonians, Liberals, Conservatives, whatever they be, each, all, proud of the boy whose name is entered in the school-books of Eton, in the month of September 1821.

To Mr. Seale-Hayne, another Etonian, first occurred the idea of gathering together a school of old Eton boys to do honour to Mr. Gladstone. Six years ago this An Eton
Dinner. very month, on the 22nd of April 1891, the member for the Ashburton division of Devon entertained old Etonians at his town house in Upper Belgrave Street. It was a notable gathering. With a single exception all the old Eton boys present were members of one or other House of Parliament. The exception was Mr. Frank Burnand, who, as Editor of *Punch*, may be said to represent the universe.

In addition to the guest of the evening, then Leader of the Opposition, full of fire and zeal for the Home Rule Bill, was Lord Kimberley, who has this Session resumed his

leadership of the House of Lords, and Lord Coleridge, then Lord Chief Justice, now gone to another place. Of commoners there were Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Mr. Beaufoy, Mr. Leveson-Gower, Mr. Foljambe, Sir Arthur Hayter, Mr. Charles Parker, Mr. Harry Lawson, Mr. Milnes-Gaskell, and Mr. Bernard Coleridge. All these, members of the House of Commons at that time, have since retired from

"SOME OLD ETON BOYS."

the Parliamentary scene. Mr. Stuart Rendel has become a peer; Sir Hussey Vivian, after a brief sojourn in the House of Lords, died; Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen is now Lord Brabourne. Lord Kensington, also translated to the peers, died the other day. Sir R. Welby, of the Treasury, declining the title Lord Cut-em-down suggested on his being raised to the peerage, sits in the House of Peers as Lord Welby. Lord Monkswell is still happily to the fore.

Of the sixteen members of the House of Commons who

then sat round Mr. Seale-Hayne's hospitable board only four retain seats in the present House — Earl Compton, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Labouchere, and the host himself.

The gaps on the two front benches of the House of Commons

Sir George Trevelyan. grow wider year by year. Familiar faces seen there through many Parliaments look forth no more. Sometimes, as in the case of Lord Hartington, Lord James of Hereford, Lord Tweedmouth, and a score of other old House of Commons men, it is the House of Lords that

draws to itself the life-blood of the

Commons, "A GRAND OLD ETON BOY," and never

shows surprise when it finds how dully it beats in the new veins. Occasionally the impulse to withdrawal from the arena comes from a sense of overpowering weariness after long strife. The scholar reasserts himself over the politician, and the longing for the library becomes irresistible. Commonest of all, it is Death that with the abhorred shears cuts the thin-spun thread.

"SIR HENRY JAMES GOING
UP TO THE LORDS."

Happily, in the case of Sir George Trevelyan, his withdrawal from the scene in which he has for thirty years been an attractive and, for the greater part of the time, a prominent figure, is due

chiefly to renewed hunger after literary work. In common with his contemporaries, he is not so young as he was. Beyond most of them he has toiled in the public service. He is good for years of work to come, and has earned a right to choose the field in which he shall chant his Angelus. The House of Commons—a large numerical section of which has not always been just, not to say generous, in its bearing towards the brilliant scholar-politician—is now united in its protestation that the loss, irreparable in its way, is all its own. For his own peace of mind and pleasure Sir George Trevelyan has undeniably taken a wise decision in closing his Parliamentary career. The admission is made the more ungrudgingly since the world looks forward to share his pleasure in the results of his fresh literary labours.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN.

His score of accomplished work, legislative and administrative, far exceeds the average. There is, nevertheless, a

A Civil Lord
with a
Conscience.

feeling among his friends and admirers that he did not, in his final achievement of Parliamentary position, justify the hopes his start excited. That may be said with fuller freedom since the reasons for it are all to Sir George's credit. The simple truth is he was too highly strung, too sensitive, too chivalrously honest, for the rough and tumble work of the House of Commons. This is the explanation of the occasional apparent indecision which excited the venomous criticism of meaner men.

Early in his Ministerial career, when it seemed he had all the world before him where to choose, he, for conscience' sake, took a step that seemed to wreck his voyage. When, in 1868, Mr. Gladstone came in on the wave of a great

majority, his shrewd eye discovered the capacity of the Competition Wallah, and he made him Civil Lord of the Admiralty. Two years later, Mr. Forster's Education Bill embodying the principle of payment of State money in support of denominational schools, Mr. Trevelyan resigned. Of course he personally, or in any practical Ministerial relation, had no responsibility in the matter. He might have stuck to his ship in the Admiralty yard and let Mr. Forster adopt the compromise forced upon him by political exigencies. It is quite conceivable that, respecting his views, Mr. Gladstone would not have insisted upon his vote in the pending division.

To Mr. Trevelyan niceties of this kind were naughtinesses. As a student of Parliamentary history, with a knowledge of men, he must have felt that the most disastrous thing a junior Minister can do is to resign on a question of Cabinet policy. Not only is such a course inconvenient to his leaders ; it undesignedly smites them with reproof. It is made to appear that what First Lords and Secretaries of State can stomach is too strong meat for the tender moral constitution of a Civil Lord of the Admiralty. There is nothing a veteran Premier dislikes more than a Junior Lord or an Under Secretary with a tendency to resign for conscience' sake.

Sir George Trevelyan had another more memorable and finally fatal attack of the same disease at the epoch of Home Rule. He never recovered from the **The Unpardonable Sin.** tossing about he then experienced. First he wouldn't have Home Rule, and abandoned place and power rather than support his old leader and revered friend. That was a hard thing to do. But, as we have seen, it was not a new thing. Harder still, bitterest pill of political life, Sir George, being convinced, upon reflection and fuller consideration, that Mr. Gladstone was right on the Home Rule question and he wrong, unhesitatingly avowed his error and went back to the fold.

That is in politics the unpardonable sin. A man may be forgiven for crossing over the way, leaving his early

friends and ranging himself in the camp of the adversary. But before he goes back again, under whatever pressure of honest conviction, a man would do well to consider the advantages of the alternative course of tying a millstone round his neck and dropping into the sea.

Sir George Trevelyan's courage has through all his life been equal to his convictions. This quality was shown in another way, when on the morrow of the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish in Phoenix Park he accepted the proffered post of danger. Lord-Lieutenants and their Chief Secretaries of to-day know little of the daily and hourly existence of their predecessors in office fifteen years ago. Something, it is true, has since been realised upon disclosure of the systematic sneaking after Mr. Forster with murderous intent. Through their term of office Lord Spencer and Sir George Trevelyan never drove through the streets without an armed escort, whilst protecting policemen followed them like shadows, not only in Dublin but in London.

From the window of his bedroom at the Viceregal Lodge, Lord Spencer, looking across the Park, could see the spot where Lord Frederick Cavendish was done to death. He had, indeed, been an actual witness of the murder on the fateful Saturday, regarding it with mild interest under the impression that it was some boys larking.

A gruesome story is told in the Chief Secretary's lodge, pleasantly set amongst the woods, fronted by the gracious beauty of the Wicklow hills. Ten days after the new Chief Secretary had taken up his residence at the lodge, Lady Trevelyan, looking round the drawing-room with housewifely care, observed something lying under the sofa. Calling a servant to have it removed, it turned out to be the blood-stained, dust-begrimed, knife-pierced coat of poor Frederick Cavendish.

After the murder he was carried home. The coat, taken off and thrust under the sofa, escaped the notice of the diligent Irish housemaids. A ghastly home-coming this for a new tenant!

It was bad enough for Sir George to face the physical dangers and insuperable difficulties of his position in Ireland. But his place on the Treasury Bench in the House of Commons was scarcely less worrying. ^{Grey-haired.}

It is a favourite episode with old romancists how a night of terror whitens a man's hair. In May 1882, when Sir George Trevelyan became Chief Secretary for Ireland, no thread of silver shone in his abundant hair. When, two years and a half later, having lived through the time of terror, he resigned the office, he was a grey-haired man.

He never complained of the storm and stress, but inevitably it must have told upon his strength.

It is worry that saps the strength. Sir George Trevelyan, who, though a little tired, came out of the stand-up fight in Ireland with a brave heart and unshaken resolution, never got over the snapping of old ties, the breaking up of ancient friendships, that, as it happened, befell him alternately in two political camps.

As every student of Parliamentary history knows, it is primarily and largely due to Sir George Trevelyan's far-sighted pluck that the agricultural labourer and ^{Mr. Arch, M.P.} the small county householder to-day have their Parliamentary vote. His introduction of the Household Franchise (Counties) Bill in the early days of the Parliament of 1874 was notable for two things beyond the favourable impression made upon the House by the young member's brilliant speech. Mr. Burt, who has since won his way to the closest esteem of the most critical assembly in the world, took occasion to deliver his maiden speech.

The other event shows how far we have travelled on the Liberal highway during the last quarter of a century. Mr. Forster, supporting the Bill, referred to Mr. Arch, then in the forefront of his crusade, as "that eminent man." The Squirearchy filled the House with roars of derisive laughter. That was nothing to the storm of angry indignation that burst forth when burly Mr. Forster went on to express a wish, "in the interests alike of Parliament and the country, that Mr. Arch had a seat in this House." If he had sug-

gested Beelzebub as member for Birmingham, the outcry could not have been greater.

To-day, Mr. Arch represents a division of his county, to which he has been thrice elected in as many Parliaments.

He has been, at Sandringham, the honoured guest of his colleague on a Royal Commission, the Prince of Wales. Since the present Session opened, good Conservatives have freely joined in a subscription set on foot to soothe the arch-agitator's closing years with the anodyne of an annuity.

The altered status of the Irish member in these degenerate days is shown in the marked reduction of the proportion who

"In prison
often."

have been in prison. Ten years ago an Irish member rarely addressed the House of Commons without incidentally referring to a time "when I was in gaol." As sure as this remark was dropped by one member, other of his colleagues seized the opportunity of reminding their constituents, and readers

MR. JOSEPH ARCH

of the Nationalist newspapers, how they, too, had won this mark of distinction, a sort of Victoria Cross in Irish political warfare in Coercion days.

Mr. W. O'Brien earned and long enjoyed exceptional distinction in connection with his historic trousers. So uniform among his compatriots was the level of merit in the matter of imprisonment that it was necessary for a man emulous of exceptional fame to do something quite out of the way in a familiarly trodden pathway to glory.

Amongst Irish members sitting in the Parliament of to-day Mr. Davitt holds the second place in the roll of prison-martyrs. Mr. Dillon and his contemporaries in prison life had quite amateurish experience compared with the rigour

of penal servitude through which Mr. Davitt passed in the

solitude of his cell, brooding over and hatching the Land League scheme. Proud of his servitude, Mr. Davitt is not at all unready to discourse upon it. Early this Session, in debate on Sir Matthew White Ridley's release of the dynamitards, he told again how he was made a beast of burden; how, with a rope slung over his armless shoulder, he dragged about the stony causeways of Dartmoor a truck containing soil or rubbish.

Surely one of the most notable scenes the House of Commons ever

presented—an ex-convict telling,

MR. MICHAEL DAVITT.

without bitterness, of the indignities he suffered for what he held to be his country's good, and a crowded House listening attentive, not quite free from sense of shame.

In the matters of having stood in the dock on charge of conspiracy against the Crown, and having sat in a prison cell awaiting further developments, the senior member for Cork City stands apart. It is James Francis Xavier O'Brien's distinction, unique among living citizens of this Empire, that, having been convicted of *crimen læsæ majestatis*, he was, in accordance with the statute of the good old days of Edward III., ordered to be hanged, drawn, and quartered.

THE FOUR QUARTERS OF
MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN.

I never heard Mr. O'Brien, one of the most modest as he is the mildest-mannered man in the

House, allude to this incident in his early life. It is rather a favourite topic with his colleagues, who, in some subtle sense, feel reflected upon them the glory that surrounds their colleague.

There is a well-authenticated story of a funeral in Glasgow, attended by a person, unknown to the undertaker, who assumed certain airs of importance that piqued curiosity as to his identity. The undertaker, having long mutely suffered his obtrusiveness, stopped him as he was about to enter the first mourning carriage, and asked him who he was.

"Man," he said, indignation flashing in his eyes, "I'm brither to the corp."

In respect of the many-initialled member for Cork City, the other Irish members are, politically, brothers to what almost became "a corp," and are inclined to assert themselves accordingly.

As for Mr. O'Brien, he is in personal appearance the very last man a casual observer would associate with a tragic episode. It is true that a curiously long neck and a trick of bending his head forward might, to the morbidly imaginative mind, suggest reminiscences of preparing to meet his doom on the block. But that is an idle fancy. Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien is one of the most respected members of the Irish Party, with a rare gift of silence. It is a charming trait in his character that, on being released from the penal servitude to which his capital sentence was commuted, he, instead of going about the country posing as a martyr, set up in business in Dublin in the wine and tea trade.

CHAPTER VI

MAY

IT is a striking coincidence in two careers passed on severed continents that, after a lapse of a hundred years, they should

Two Trials at Westminster. find a com-
mon stage in

a Parliamentary inquiry at Westminster. The South African Committee, which actually, if not ostensibly, sat to try Cecil Rhodes, were located in a room off Westminster Hall. Warren Hastings, impeached before the House of Lords on charges of high crimes and misdemeanours, alleged to have been committed during his Governor-Generalship in India, had much more space allotted to the splendid scene of which he was the chief figure.

IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

The stage on which Warren Hastings loomed large was, Macaulay writes, "the great hall of William Rufus, the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration

of thirty kings, the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers, the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party inflamed with just resentment, the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half-redeemed his fame."

The proceedings in connection with the investigation of the charges against the man who, in some respects, with limited opportunities, is the Warren Hastings of Africa, were strictly business-like. Here were no "peers robed in gold, scarlet, and ermine, marshalled by the herald under Garter King at Arms." No tall lines of Grenadiers guarded the way to Westminster Hall. No need to keep the streets clear by troops of jangling cavalry. The ultimate extreme in the other direction was reached. Too often the hearing of *causes célèbres* in London police-courts and in the High Courts of Justice are closely akin to first nights at the Lyceum. Celebrities of both sexes flock to the scene, eager for the new excitement. It was thus when Dr. Jameson made his first appearance at Bow Street Police Court.

Possibly profiting by experience then gained, the South African Committee resolved to exclude the general public. There being no appeal from this decision, there was no blocking of the approaches to the Committee-room. During the most exciting phases of the inquiry, the pigeons in Palace Yard placidly pursued their quest for stray grain. Within the chamber there prevailed a business air of studious simplicity. When Warren Hastings was tried in Westminster Hall, the grey old walls were hung with scarlet. For all decoration, the bare walls of the South Africa Committee-room were hung with a gigantic map of Africa.

A little more than two years ago I chanced to be a guest at Groote Schuur, Mr. Cecil Rhodes's much-loved Dutch house on the outskirts of Cape Town, which did not long survive the temporary downfall of its master, accomplishing in some way an act of suttee. Musing over a map of Africa, with its patches of green

Painting the
Map red.

rounding off Portuguese territory, its orange indicating German possession, its mauve marking where the French flag flies, its yellow colouring the Congo Free State under the Protectorate of Belgium, its wedge of light green thrust into Cape Colony showing where the Boers stand, its great splashes of red, England's mark on the map—Mr. Rhodes, placing a finger on Cape Town and moving it with rapid sweep to

MR. RHODES AND THE MAP.

the extreme north of the continent, said, "I want to paint the map red from here to there."

In the great map on the wall of the Committee-room the work thus far accomplished prominently shows. Mr. Rhodes, as he sat waiting the arrival of his judges on the opening day of the inquiry, frequently rested his eyes with proud content on the map. He may, as he admitted in reply to one of Sir William Harcourt's questions, have been "morally culpable." But there was Rhodesia.

It is curious, observing further points of resemblance between the two great State trials, to note how circumstances vary after the lapse of a century. There were peers at both.

But whilst, when Warren Hastings was tried, their lordships **Prince and Peers in Mufti.** arrived robed in gold and ermine, marshalled by the heralds under Garter King at Arms, when Mr. Cecil Rhodes was examined, noble lords dropped in in ordinary morning dress, thankful to find room to sit with humbler folk. "Last of all," writes Macaulay, in his famous description already quoted, "came the Prince of Wales, conspicuous by his fine person and noble bearing."

The Prince of Wales was present on the opening days of the proceedings before the South African Committee. But he drove down in his private brougham, walked in unannounced, unattended, and, like the rest of the community, was kept waiting three-quarters of an hour whilst the Committee, deliberating in a private room, considered how they should dispose of three or four ladies who, in calm defiance of prohibition, had secured entrance to the Committee-room and, dressed all in their best, beamingly awaited the commencement of business.

The procession of the Committee, headed by Sir William Harcourt, marching to seat themselves at the table, brushed past the Heir-Apparent without the courtly acknowledgment of his presence, perhaps never before omitted. It was a small matter, but strikingly indicative of the marble-like austerity of the proceedings, devoid from first to last of the pomp and circumstance attendant upon the scene Macaulay delighted to paint.

There is another parallel of modern times to be found in Warren Hastings's Parliamentary experience and that of a famous man belonging to the end of this century.

Warren Hastings and Charles Stewart Parnell. Just twenty-five years after Hastings stood at the bar in Westminster Hall upon charges which, if proved, might have cost him his life, certainly his liberty, he again appeared on the Parliamentary scene. In the year 1813 the Charter of the East India Company came up for renewal. It was decided to examine witnesses at the bar of the House of Commons, and Warren Hastings, who since his acquittal had lived in retirement, was summoned to attend.

The object of the bitter resentment of yester-year

ENTER THE COMMITTEE.

presenting himself in obedience to the summons, the Commons received him with acclamation. When, after giving his evidence, he retired, members rose *en masse*, bared their heads, and remained standing till his figure disappeared through the doorway.

Seventy-six years later, as far as I know with no parallel instance in the meanwhile, a similar honour was done to another man. None present in the ^{Parnell's} House of Commons on a night in the early ^{Apogee.} spring of 1889 will forget one of the most dramatic scenes ever witnessed on this stage of illimitable possibilities. The House had been engaged for five nights in debate on an amendment to the Address challenging the Irish policy of the Government. Mr. Parnell, engaged in attendance on the Commission associated with his name, had been long absent from his place below the gangway. It was rumoured that he was coming to-day. The town still throbbed with excitement of the news from Madrid. On the previous Monday Pigott, the mainstay of the charges against Mr. Parnell, breaking down under the masterly cross-examination of Sir Charles Russell, fled. On this 1st of March came news that he had finished his career with a pistol-shot.

The incident served to intensify the sympathy with the man against whom Pigott had plotted. The sitting wore on towards midnight, and still Parnell did not come. It was so much his usual manner to avoid anything like fulfilment of expectation, to stay away when he was expected, to turn up when no one was looking for him, that members came to the conclusion he would not be seen.

—
MR. PARNELL RISES.

of the camp of the enemy—bitterest of all enemies, the estranged friend. With Mr. Tim Healy on one side and

AN UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION.

Mr. Sexton on the other, he sat by the hour in haughty silence, ignoring their existence as utterly as if they had been stocks and stones.

Sir Henry Edwards, who did not live long enough to see this year's daffodils—

daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares—

was type of a Parliament man almost extinct. It is thirty years next month since he entered the House of Commons as member for Weymouth. He was just in time An Old-Style Member. to witness Mr. Disraeli's historic gyrations on the platform of Parliamentary reform. He remained member for Weymouth till another Reform Bill swept the little borough into the limbo where linger the ghosts of Gatton and Old Sarum. There were just under seventeen hundred voters on the register. Every man of them knew the warm pressure of Henry Edwards's hand. Not a poor wife in the circle that had not benefited by his blankets.

As for the children, some for the first time in their little lives, as they munched his cake and sucked his "goodies," realised how kind a phenomenon a father might be.

Unlike other members whose connection with a constituency is peremptorily severed, Henry Edwards to the last kept up his friendly relations with Weymouth. As surely

SIR HENRY EDWARDS AND HIS STATUE.

as the name of Calais was seared on the heart of Queen Mary, so, if search were made, Weymouth would be found written on the heart of Henry Edwards. As regularly as Christmas came round the aged poor of the disfranchised borough banqueted upon his bounty. Weymouth was not ungrateful, setting up his statue in her most public place. Edmund Yates, a very old friend, was the originator of the fable that the principal contributor to the statue fund was Henry Edwards himself.

"A good, kind man," Yates used to say, "not letting his left hand know what his right hand did. He gave the money secretly, and blushed to find it a statue."

Yates had a circumstantial story of strolling through Weymouth on a moonlight night and coming upon Henry Edwards walking round and about the statue, observing its effect from varying distances. But Edwards was accustomed to being chaffed by his friends, and as it was always done good-humouredly, with display of real personal liking, he suffered with a smile.

He made a considerable fortune during the Crimean War, the result of a lucky consignment of linseed. Whence the style of "Linseed Edwards" under which he was known amid ancient House of Commons smoking-room coteries. It would not have been difficult for him to find a seat else-

where after Weymouth was absorbed in the county. But his faithful heart could not woo another constituency. He and Weymouth were a sort of political Darby and Joan. When the ruthless hand of the reformer severed the union, he to the end of his days remained a Parliamentary widower.

At the Reform Club and elsewhere he retained many of the friendships and acquaintances made in the House of Commons. He aimed at winning the distinction of *le véritable Amphytrion*, *l'Amphytrion où l'on dîne*. He

SIR HENRY EDWARDS ON A TRIAL TRIP.

was justly proud of his cheerful little dinners in Berkeley Square. In their composition W. S. Gilbert's idea of a perfect dinner was realised, the company on the chairs being

selected with skill and care equal to those bestowed upon the viands and the wine on the table.

Another scene on which Henry Edwards was found at great advantage was a trial trip of the P. and O.'s ever-increasing, ever-improving fleet. It was an ominous sign that, when the *India* set forth on her trial trip last August, he was obliged to decline the invitation of his old friend Sir Thomas Sutherland. I suppose it was the first of these charming voyages he had missed for twenty years. At other times he was sure to be found among the company. It was delightful to see him when the seas were calm, pacing the snowy deck in a natty serge suit suggestive of the trained yachtsman, his peaked cap cocked a little to one side so that he might keep his win'ard eye on the offing.

A kindly soul, withal shrewd-headed, he lived a fortunate life and died a happy death. For as the newspaper report hath it, "he died in his sleep."

A paragraph has been going the rounds

Hats and to the effect

Hoods. that at a

meeting of the Kildare

Archæological Society

a hat worn by Daniel

O'Connell was ex-

hibited. There was

no mistake about the

article, for O'Connell,

mindful of the com-

pany he occasionally frequented, had written his name inside.

That seems to have been a supererogatory precaution, for

the hat was so large it would have been useful to but few

of O'Connell's contemporaries. The chairman putting it on

TRYING ON O'CONNELL'S HAT.

partially disappeared from view of the alarmed audience, the rim of the hat coming down to his chin.

It is stated that "the width of the hat was $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; its longer diameter 10 in."

I have garnered some particulars of the sizes of the heads of eminent men, but have come upon nothing so big as this. Mr. Gladstone sports a hat of the size of $7\frac{3}{8}$, exactly Lord Macaulay's measurement. Lord Beaconsfield wore a hat of 7 inches, an undesigned but characteristically courtly imitation of the Prince of Wales, whose hat is of the same size. Charles Dickens, the late Lord Selborne, and Mr. John Bright wore hats $7\frac{1}{8}$ size. The late Earl Russell wanted an eighth more. Charles Dickens's hat would have been too small for Thackeray by half an inch. Louis Philippe and, strange conjunction, M. Julien wore hats of $7\frac{3}{4}$. An illustrious man of recent times who took the smallest hat on my list was Dean Stanley, for whom $6\frac{3}{4}$ sufficed. For his friend Dr. Thompson, Archbishop of York, a hat of full eight inches diameter was necessary.

Dean Stanley's hat, comparatively small as it was, on one occasion held more than his head. There still lingers round St. Margaret's Church echoes of a story, told about a sermon preached by the Dean to a morning congregation, including the accustomed leavening of members of the House of Commons. When the service was over, the Dean, evidently much pleased, remarked to his wife on the exceeding close attention the congregation had paid him.

"I don't wonder at it, my dear," she said, "when one of your gloves was all the time on the top of your head."

The Dean was habitually immobile in the pulpit, and accustomed to walk there with steady step. Removing his hat before entering the vestry, of his gloves therein stored one rested on the top of his head, and remained through his discourse.

At least, that is the story told in ordinarily reputable Parliamentary circles.

CHAPTER VII

JUNE

ON the 17th of next month it will be sixty years since Queen Victoria first appeared in the House of Lords. The occasion was not to welcome the coming guest in the person of a new House of Commons, but to speed the parting guest—the last Parliament of the reign of William IV. All London flocked forth to greet the girl-Queen as she passed through the streets on her way, for the first time, to sit in Parliament. She charmed the crowd with her grace and beauty, her progress being accompanied by a salvo of cheering. It is noted in contemporary record that she was dressed in a white satin robe decorated with jewels and gold, the Garter on her arm, a mantle of velvet over her shoulders.

*The Queen
and
Parliament.*

A gay summer garb this, compared with the sombre habiliments in which the Queen made her final entrance to the House of Lords. But it is not nearly so pretty as that described by Miss Wynn, the very first in which the new Queen presented herself to her subjects.

It was the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain who were privileged to behold the vision of loveliness. William IV. died just before dawn of the 20th of June 1837. The Primate and the Lord Chamberlain were in attendance waiting the end. When it came they posted off to Kensington Palace, where the girl, straightway become a Queen, lived with her mother.

*An early
Morning Visit.*

It was five o'clock in the morning when they reached

the Palace. Naturally no one was up. Archbishop and Lord Chamberlain took turns in thumping at the gate, and at length brought up the porter. He thought the courtyard was near enough access to the house for elderly gentlemen out at such time in the morning. The Archbishop and his companion, after forlornly hanging round, found their way into a room off the courtyard. Here at least was a bell, which, being in good training with their exercise at the door, they vigorously rang. After long delay they saw the Princess's maid, who said her mistress was fast asleep and could not be disturbed. Their message, they urged, brooked no delay. So the Princess was awakened, and Miss Wynn writes :—

“In a few minutes she came into the room in a loose white night-gown and shawl, her night-cap thrown off, her hair falling upon her shoulders, her feet in slippers, tears in her eyes, but perfectly collected and dignified.”

I wonder some great artist has not transferred this simple picture to imperishable canvas. It does not seem too late to begin even in the sixtieth year of the reign which opened in this room off the courtyard.

The last time the Queen opened Parliament in person was on the 5th of February 1880. It was noted at the time as a curious incident that in the course of the proceedings the Queen very nearly lost her crown. Seating herself on the throne, the long white ribbon pendant from the back of the cap on which the crown was set caught in her dress. But for the presence of mind of the Princess Beatrice, who deftly released the ribbon, the least that would have happened would have been that the Queen would have presented to the brilliant assembly the curious effect of the crown askew on the top of her head, portrayed in the melancholy design of the coinage struck a few years later.

In the April number of the *Strand* of last year appears the following passage: “Within the walls of the Palace at Westminster, and on the grass-plots in its immediate

neighbourhood, statues are appropriately raised to great Parliament men. The muster will surely be incomplete if place be not found for a counterfeit presentment of Lord Randolph Churchill. . . . The House of Commons will not always refrain from doing honour to one of its most brilliant, if one of its most wilful, sons."

This was an obvious suggestion, needing only to be thrown out to find acceptance. During the recess some correspondence privily took place among members, and as soon as the Session opened a small committee got to work and threw the project into practical shape. It was wisely resolved to have, not a full-length statue with the inevitable stone legs and marble fringe to a modern frock-coat, but a bust, to be placed in one of the passages of the House, where it might be seen by members going to and fro on their ordinary business.

The subscription, limited to a guinea, is open only to members of the House of Commons who were contemporaries at one stage or other of Lord Randolph's meteoric career. The list is of itself striking. If it were possible to engrave the names in columns on the pedestal it would add considerably to the historic value and interest of the monument. How much has happened since Lord Randolph sat in the House as member for Woodstock is found in conjunction of the two simple matters of fact that Mr. Gladstone sent his subscription from Cannes, where, far removed from the vortex of political life, he was making spring holiday in a green old age; and that the plain Drummond Wolff of Fourth Party days sent his tribute from Madrid by the cheque of his Excellency the Right Hon. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Her Majesty's Minister to Alfonso XIII., King of Spain.

If Lord Randolph's esteemed successor in the Leadership of the House of Commons were still alive, there is no doubt that, forgetful of some bitter memories, his guinea would also be forthcoming with intent to keep green the memory of *l'enfant terrible* of his troubled times. By a happy chance Lord Randolph Churchill and

Mr. W. H. Smith, sometimes divided in life by sharp turns of controversy, united in death, will in memories of future Parliaments live together in close companionship. It is arranged that, when completed, Lord Randolph's bust shall have an honoured place found for it in the corridor leading out from the lobby, by the main staircase, where the placid face of "Old Morality" looks out on the stream of members hurrying to and from the House.

Another indication of the wisdom that prevails in the councils of the committee in charge of the bust is found in

The Portrait. the fact that they have determined the face

reproduced shall be that familiar to the House of Commons prior to Lord Randolph's journey to South Africa. The Lord Randolph who set forth in quest of sport and gold and health carried the face familiar in the House of Commons, on public platforms, and in a thousand illustrated journals. He was closely shaven with the exception of a heavy moustache, the tugging of which during debate in the House of Commons was an appreciable assistance in concentrating his thoughts and shaping his replies. He came back almost unrecognisable, with short, thick, brown beard, cultivated amid the exigencies of life on the veldt.

I am the fortunate possessor of a portrait for which Lord Randolph sat in the year 1891. It was painted in his library at Connaught Place, and is admitted to be the most faithful presentment of the living man. When in the year following Lord

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.

Sketched by F. C. Gould from the Painting by E. A. Ward.

Randolph set out on his travels through South Africa he commissioned the artist to paint a replica. This, on the

eve of his journey, he presented to his mother, the Duchess of Marlborough, with whom it remains a precious possession.¹ It is the face here pictured, mature, resolute, in the very prime of life, that the sculptor will carve in indelible marble.

When, the other day, an Irish member read long extracts from a Cork paper, alleging iniquity against a Government official, proceeding thereupon to put a question to Mr. Gerald Balfour, the Speaker ruled him out of order. If, the Speaker said, the Hon. Member were prepared on his own responsibility to affirm belief in certain statements published in a newspaper, he might thereupon put a question to the Minister. But a question might not be so addressed merely upon the authority of a newspaper report. Newspapers
in the House.

Mr. Gully is so habitually accurate and sound in his rulings that he, doubtless, has with him in this judgment the authority of the law and the support of the prophets. It is, nevertheless, a little startling to people familiar with the ordinary usage of the House. It is no exaggeration to say that one-third of the total of questions put in the course of a Session, an alarming aggregate, are avowedly based upon newspaper reports. In most instances the newspaper is named as the authority, the Minister being definitively questioned as to whether he has seen it.

The rule, doubtless, had its birth in times when newspapers were not, or only furtively existed. To this day newspapers remain under a ban in the House of Commons. A member dare no more take one out of his pocket and glance at it whilst the House is in Session than he dare take off his coat and sit in his shirt-sleeves. Strangers, safe in the panoply of ignorance, have been known in dull passages of debate to produce an evening newspaper, spread it forth, and propose to themselves a study of its contents. None has lived to repeat the indiscretion. The manner in which the offender is pounced down Contraband
Goods.

¹ In 1902 permission was given for the painting of a second replica, which Mr. Winston Churchill presented to his mother.

upon by janitors from either side of the gallery is in its vehemence sufficient to shatter the strongest nerves.

Another quaint House of Commons' ordinance coming down from ancient times forbids direct reference to the House of Lords or any of its works. The rule "Another Place." is evaded by cautious reference to "another place." But that device may not be pushed far without risk of reproof from the Chair. In existing circumstances, not only with the Premier in the other House but with his lordship exercising the functions of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the rule has obvious inconveniences. These are sharpened by a pleasant habit, native to Lord Salisbury's mind, of ignoring the existence of the House of Commons, treating the House of Lords to confidences which at the very moment he is speaking may, under his instructions, be denied to the Commons by the representative of the Foreign Office in that House.

The effect of such procedure on the placid mind of Sir William Harcourt is easily imagined. The consequences are aggravated since the rule of debate in the House of Commons precludes him from giving full expression to his feelings.

LORD MELBOURNE—1837.

LORD SALISBURY—1897.

TWO PRIME MINISTERS.

CHAPTER VIII

JULY

THERE still linger round the Houses of Parliament traces of the terror that reigned twelve years ago after the explosion in the Crypt, following at no long distance of time upon the more serious outrage that shook the offices of the Local Government Board at Whitehall. Something like a state of siege was declared within the precincts of the Houses of Parliament. The police garrison was more than doubled. The railings of Palace Yard formed the limit of approach. Respectable persons halting for a moment in passing to look within became objects of dire suspicion to the watchful police. The very messengers running between the newspaper offices and the Press Gallery were numbered and labelled, and required to display their authority before passing the cordon of police.

Up to that period of panic Westminster Hall remained, though in somewhat restricted conditions, what it had ever been, a possession and a thoroughfare for the people. In *Barnaby Rudge* there is a graphic picture of the scene at the era of the Lord George Gordon Riots, drawn by Charles Dickens from contemporary records. "There were many knots and groups of persons in Westminster Hall," Dickens writes, "some few looking upward at its noble ceiling, and at the rays of evening light, tinted by the setting sun, which streamed in aslant through its small windows, and, growing dimmer by

The Reign of
of Terror.

Westminster
Hall in the
Olden Time.

degrees, were quenched in the gathering gloom below. Some noisy passengers, mechanics going home from work, and otherwise, who hurried quickly through, waking the echoes with their voices, and soon darkening the small door in the distance, as they passed into the street beyond. Some in busy conference together on political or private matters, pacing slowly up and down with eyes that sought the ground, and seeming, by their attitudes, to listen earnestly

OLD WESTMINSTER HALL.

From an Illustration in "Barnaby Rudge," by Cattemole.

from head to foot. Here a dozen squabbling urchins made a very Babel in the air. There a solitary man, half-clerk, half-mendicant, paced up and down, with hungry dejection in his look and gait. At his elbow passed an errand-lad, swinging his basket round and round, and with his shrill whistle riving the very timbers of the roof; while a more observant schoolboy, half-way through, pocketed his ball, and eyed the distant beadle as he came looming on. The smooth, worn pavement, dusty with footsteps, still called upon the lofty walls to reiterate the shuffle and the tread of

feet unceasingly, save when the closing of some heavy door resounded through the building like a clap of thunder, and drowned all other noises in its rolling sound."

As long as the Courts of Justice flanked Westminster Hall, the splendid vestibule was, by necessity, left free to access by the people. Whilst the Courts were ^{In the} sitting, it was scarcely a less picturesque scene ^{Claimant's Day.} than that depicted by Dickens. Shortly before the demolition of the old courts, the drama reached its climax in the coming and going of the Claimant. Morning and evening, through weeks and months, the broad width of Westminster Hall was narrowed by a wedge of humanity that opened to make room for this portly person waddling to and from his carriage.

When the seat of justice was shifted to the Strand the House of Commons clutched at Westminster Hall, and with its traditional exclusive selfishness, proclaimed it sacred ground. The public were not absolutely excluded, but they were not, as heretofore, indiscriminately admitted, necessity being created for showing that they had some business or errand in direct communication with the courts. If, for example, they had orders for the gallery, they might pass through Westminster Hall on their way thither. They might even, on field nights, stand in groups to the right of the big doorway, watching the members pass through, and loudly whisper their names. After the explosion panic, the public were so rigidly excluded from Westminster Hall, that a member might not personally conduct a stranger along the echoing pavement of the lonely hall.

As far as the safety of members in Session in the House of Commons is concerned, these restrictions are as ineffective as they are arbitrary. A nineteenth-century Guy Fawkes provided with a modern explosive would not haunt subterranean passages or waste his time in Westminster Hall. As that blatant personage O'Donovan Rossa showed a couple of Sessions ago, there is no difficulty in obtaining a seat on the front bench of the Strangers' Gallery. Being there, O'Donovan Rossa was content to obtain cheap adver-

tisement by flinging out a noisy protest upon the astonished heads of members. If he had meant business, he might, at his leisure, and with certain aim, have flung on the floor a bomb that would promptly and indefinitely have adjourned the sitting.

This contingency was ever present with the authorities during the scare. They attempted to guard against it by careful examination of anything that looked bulky about the person of a stranger. Even members carrying small black bags were objects of police suspicion. It was felt then, and the assurance remains, that the unassailable basis of safety of the House of Commons from murderous assault from the Strangers' Galleries is the invincible objection *Messieurs les assassins* have to linger within reach of the explosive at its supreme moment. They hanker after the slow match and the opportunity it provides of getting away to a safe distance, before innocent and unsuspecting sojourners or passers-by are blown into eternity.

One of the quaintest relics of the scare exists out of public view in the back courtyard of the Houses of Parliament. The long length of this is bridged at various points by portions of the building. The habitual tendency of the dynamitards to place one of their infernal machines in a snug corner, under an arched building, pointed the police mind to these passages as being the very places where attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament would be made. Accordingly, in the height of the panic, order was given that a policeman should be placed on duty at every archway, relief being so arranged that by night as well as by day the spot should be guarded. The edict has never been withdrawn, and into this peaceful Jubilee year, day and night, summer and winter, through the recess as through the Session, every archway of the Court Yard echoes to the tread of a puzzled policeman wondering what he does there.

Study of a collection of pictures and prints depicting the House of Commons in Session at various epochs of its history is, apart from the personalities, interesting as illustrat-

ing the changes in sartorial fashion. The House in Session in early spring was, to tell the truth, a very ordinary-looking assembly. Summer setting in with the severity of the last two years, the dull-toned benches blossom in summer array. Now is the coy cummerbund seen, and the white ducks of Cap'en Tommy Bowles flutter to and fro, imbuing the scene with a grateful touch of purity and innocence.

**Dress in the
House
of Commons.**

At its best and brightest, the House of Commons is, from the spectacular point of view, a poor thing compared with what it was in the time of Walpole, or even of Pitt. In the National Portrait Gallery there is a precious picture of the House, showing it at work in the Session of 1742. It is an engraving by Piné from a drawing from life by Gravelot. The scene is, of course, the old House of Commons, with its chapel-like galleries, its candelabra pendant from the ceiling. Speaker Onslow is in the Chair, and the crowded audience is addressed by Sir Robert Walpole, who bears the blue ribbon of the Garter. All the members wear wigs, and are dressed in handsome frock-coats with high stocks. According to the custom common to gentlemen of England of the day, every man sports his sword. To-day the only armed man in the House of Commons is the Serjeant-at-Arms.

The inflexibility of the rule against either members or strangers bringing weapons into the House incidentally adds to the long list of injustices to Ireland. It is an ancient privilege of the City of Dublin, that when in its corporate capacity it presents a petition to the House of Commons, the document is presented in person by the Lord Mayor, gowned and chained, accompanied by his sheriffs, his mace-bearer, and his sword-bearer. But before entering the House the sword-bearer is obliged to deposit his lethal weapon with the door-keeper.

Another instance where this rule, prohibiting the carrying of arms in the House, arbitrarily interfered with a peaceable procedure, is connected with one of the few speeches the present Lord Tweedmouth addressed to the House of Commons whilst he still

Mr. Marjoribanks's Disappointment.

sat in it as Mr. Marjoribanks. He had strong views in respect to a new magazine rifle. I forget precisely what direction they took. In order to do justice to their exposition, it was found necessary to turn the Whips' room into a sort of armoury. For several nights any one entering, on whatever business, was pretty certain to find himself covered by a deadly barrel, along whose glistening level Mr. Marjoribanks's eye gleamed. He was merely explaining to some one

LORD TWEEDMOUTH AND THE NEW RIFLE.

else the bearings of the new rifle. It was startling at first. But when the caller, by the frequency of his visits, grew accustomed to it, it came to be regarded as quite a friendly reception.

Mr. Marjoribanks had looked forward to the advantage of a collection of the magazine rifles within reach of him as he stood at the table of the House delivering his lecture. The Speaker thought it would be interesting, but ruled it was irregular. So the rifles were left in the Whips' room.

In Pitt's time swords were no longer worn in the House of Commons, though in other respects the dress of members is scarcely less picturesque. In the National Portrait Gallery there is another painting showing the House of Commons in Session in 1793. It is the work of a German artist, Karl Anton Hickel, who was fortunate in obtaining special sittings from prominent members. That such a picture was in existence long remained a tradition round Westminster. Diligent inquiry failed to get upon its track. It was ascertained that the artist on returning to his own country had taken his work with him.

It was the late Mr. Edward Stanhope who did the nation the service of capturing the prize. By diligent research he discovered that in the year after the Battle of Waterloo, the Emperor of Austria bought the picture from the heirs of the painter. It was carried to Vienna and subsided into a store-room. Earl Granville, at the time Foreign Secretary, took a warm interest in the matter, with the result that the Emperor of Austria graciously presented the picture to the National Portrait Gallery, where it now hangs—in somewhat of a vault it is true, but

MR. PITT.

From Hichel's Picture of the House of Commons.

worth studying when the sun shines.

The scene is full of life and colour. William Pitt, in velvet coat and knee-breeches, with white silk stockings, is addressing the House, looking much less like Mr. Chamberlain than he does in his statue at Knowle, and in the less meritorious work of art in the corridor leading to

VERY LIKE SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD.

the Lobby of the House of Commons. All the members are clean-shaven, powdered, and wigged. One on the Treasury

Bench, immediately behind Mr. Pitt, is a colleague startlingly like Sir Frank Lockwood. With the exception of one or two members, who wear low, broad-brimmed felt hats, all are uncovered. *Per contra*, the Speaker wears the three-cornered hat, taken in hand in these days only for the purpose of counting the House.

At the corner seat below the gangway, inconveniently squeezed, is a figure which one would at first sight take to be the Chaplain, though what he is doing there, seated among members, is inexplicable. It is not the Chaplain, but the Master of the Rolls, arrayed in black gown and clerical bands. To-day the Master of the Rolls seated on that bench would be as much out of place as would be the Chaplain.

A better-known picture of the House of Commons, since it has longer been a national possession, is Sir George Hayter's view of the interior of the House In Peel's Parliament. at the meeting of the first Reformed Parliament on the 5th of February 1833. In the serried ranks on the bench immediately behind his leader, Sir Robert Peel, is seated "the rising hope of the Conservative Party"—Mr. W. E. Gladstone, at the time in his twenty-fourth year, member for Newark. There is nothing about the face or figure that recalls the statesman we have known in recent years, the sole survivor of that now ghostly gathering.

The muster-roll contains some names familiar in Parliamentary history. Lord John Russell is on the Treasury Bench. Near him his esteemed colleague Lord Palmerston. Seated in various parts of the House are Sir Francis Burdett, Thomas Fowell Buxton, William Cobbett, John Evelyn Denison, afterwards Speaker; Sir James Graham, Grote, the historian; Gully, the sometime prize-fighter; Lord Althorpe, afterwards Earl Spencer; Lord Ashley, longer known as the Earl of Shaftesbury; the two Barings, who later severally became Lord Ashburton and Lord Northbrook; Cam Hobhouse, Jeffrey, of the *Edinburgh*; Henry Labouchere, who, unmindful of his nephew's later developed prejudices, became Lord Taunton; Macaulay, then sitting for Leeds; Daniel

O'Connell, who in this Parliament preceded Lord Randolph Churchill in his preference for the corner seat below the gangway to the left of the Chair; John Arthur Roebuck, Lalor Shiel, Christopher Talbot, who only the other day, as it seemed, sat in the House of Commons with the proud title of its Father, now passed on to Mr. Villiers; Poulett Thompson, Sir Harry Verney, not long passed away, and John Walter, proprietor of the *Times*.

Among the Standing Orders added in recent years is, as already stated, one whereby the Speaker or Chairman of Committees, deeming a demand for a division frivolous, may refuse to waste the time of the Artful. House in sending members round the lobbies. In such cases he calls upon members crying for the division to stand up in their places. The division lobby clerks are called in, the names of the small minority are taken down, and printed in the papers distributed on the following day.

For many Sessions this ordinance was passively operative. A fractious minority, knowing what was in store for them if they persisted, shrank from the ludicrous position of standing up like naughty boys whilst their names were taken down in presence of a jeering majority. This Session an ingenious mind discovered quite unexpected opportunities in Standing Order No. 30. He observed that the names of the minority, printed in the Orders of the Day, were reckoned as if they had taken part in an ordinary division. This was worth double an average opportunity. Not only did the minority get a mark each in the table of divisions, but others of the majority, who might be pressing them close for precedence, were out of the running. The discovery was followed by an epidemic of frivolously claimed divisions within the meaning of the statute. Loyal Ministerialists, staying up late at night to back up the Government, sat in anguished impotence whilst some five or a dozen members opposite, frivolously claiming divisions, ran up their score three or four points in a single night.

After enduring this experience for what seemed an

interminable period, an appeal was made to the Speaker, who, amid loud cheers, ruled that the practice, as far as it affected the division table, was an infringement of the spirit of the rule. Hereafter, the names of these minorities, though they will be taken down and printed, will not be included in the division list. This ruling was marked by a sudden and complete cessation of the practice of frivolously claiming divisions.

I hear a pretty story about a visit recently paid by Lord Charles Beresford to a Yorkshire town

A new Hat
Trick.

"ANGUISHED IMPOTENCE."

famed for its ironworks. The

popular visitor was conducted over one of the largest foundries, among whose chief possessions is a massive Nasmyth hammer. After the mighty engine had performed a series of gigantic operations Lord Charles was invited to place his hat beneath the hammer and see what would become of it.

The hat was a new one, selected for the special occasion. Lord Charles had just seen chunks of iron battered out to the thickness of a threepenny-bit. But the commander of the *Condor*, the captain of the boat that went up the Nile and mended its

"CRUSHED AGAIN!"

boiler under a heavy fire, was not the man to flinch from the ordeal. He took off his hat and placed it under the hammer.

Down flashed the enormous weight, stopping short within a hair's-breadth of the roof of the hat. Lord Charles, with his childlike smile, resumed his prized possession.

Amongst the visitor's escort was Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett.

"Most wonderful!" said Lord Charles, turning to the local but far-famed M.P.

"Oh! not at all," said he; "a mere nothing. They never fail. Now I'll try mine."

He placed his hat (not quite so glossy a specimen as Lord Charles's) under the hammer. At a given signal down it came, smashing the astonished hat much flatter than a pancake.

CHAPTER IX

AUGUST

IN his preface to White's *Inner Life of the House of Commons*, published in the summer by Fisher Unwin, Mr. Justin

Mr. Gladstone's Maiden Speech. M'Carthy writes: "Mr. Gladstone's maiden speech fell so utterly unnoted that, until some recent publications had settled the question, he was almost invariably set down as having made his first speech at a later date and on a more important subject."

More than sixty years have elapsed since the speech was made. Few are now living who heard it. Record is slight, and, as Mr. M'Carthy points out, is a little mixed as to the precise occasion. But Mr. Gladstone vividly remembers it. "Mr. M'Carthy," he said, when I called his attention to the passage, "has fallen into a slight error. My maiden speech was noticed in debate in a marked manner by Mr. Stanley, who was in charge of the Bill."

The memorable speech was delivered on the 17th of May 1833. The occasion was the introduction by Mr. Stanley, then Colonial Secretary, of a series of resolutions on which it was designed to found an Act abolishing slavery in the British Colonies. (Thirty-five years later Mr. Gladstone adopted the same form of Parliamentary procedure as a preliminary to his Bill for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church.) Parliament, the first after the Reform Act, met on the 29th of January, and the 17th of May was a little early for a new member to claim a hearing. Mr. Disraeli,

however, was even more prompt. He was returned for Maidstone in the first Parliament of the Queen. On the 20th of November 1837, it was opened by Her Majesty in person, and on the seventh day of the following month Mr. Disraeli delivered what remains as the most famous of his Parliamentary speeches, the one brought to abrupt conclusion with the passionate prophecy, "The time will come when you *shall* hear me."

Mr. Gladstone has the excuse that he was directly dragged into the controversy. Lord Howick, afterwards Lord Grey, in the course of his speech pointedly referred to the estate of Mr. Gladstone's father in Demerara, drawing from its domestic history alleged proof that slave labour in the West Indies meant early death for the slaves.

The Mr. Stanley whose commendation the new member was justly proud of became in due time Earl of Derby, Prime Minister, patron and colleague of Mr. Disraeli.

Mr. Gladstone's memory of persons and incidents connected with his first Parliament is so precise as to extend to the door-keepers. He remembers their names, "Scott and Williams, one tall, the other short, but both with snow-white or powdered hair and florid faces."

Door-keepers
in the
Commons.

In this connection, Mr. Gladstone mentions a fact which will be new to the present generation of Parliament men. In his time, and for many years after, the door-keepers were not paid by salary charged on the Civil Service Estimates, but were dependent upon fees voluntarily paid them by members. An old official, whose memory goes back over thirty years, tells me he heard that the sum given was "two guineas each." This must mean a contribution per member of two guineas, one for each door-keeper. As there were then 658 members, this sum, duly paid up, would bring nearly £700 per man for six months' attendance.

There was a current belief amongst the less highly paid servitors of the House that these coveted posts were obtained by purchase. It was said that £1000 was paid "to some one." As the some one must needs have been the Serjeant-at-Arms

of the day, the story is not credible. It is quite possible for the student of advertisements in the Church newspapers to believe that places for the cure of souls under the ægis of the Church are bartered and sold. But the mind shrinks from contemplation of a Serjeant-at-Arms, even in the unreformed Parliament, selling the place of door-keeper, and guiltily secreting the £1000 in the pocket of his tight breeches.

I believe Mr. White, the door-keeper whose interesting book has recalled Mr. Gladstone's reminiscences of his early

Parliamentary life, was the first door-keeper whose salary was carried on the Votes. He was appointed by Lord Charles Russell, who was certainly far above the £1000 suspicion, even had grounds for it not been removed by the altered circumstances of payment. Lord Charles made Mr. White's acquaintance at a time when the future historian of the Inner

MR. WILLIAM WHITE.

Life of the House of Commons was taking an active part in local affairs of the ducal town. He liked him so much that, a vacancy in the chair at the door of the House happening, he, fortunately for posterity, inducted the Bedford citizen.

The salary of the principal door-keeper to-day is £300 a year, his colleague in the chair opposite drawing £250.

A Comfortable It is one of the anomalies of the relations of the
Berth. two Houses that, whilst this modest salary suffices

for the really hard-worked officials in the Commons, the door-keepers in the Lords, whose task is by comparison a sinecure, are paid at precisely the same rate. Moreover, there are two principal door-keepers in the Lords, who between them draw £600 a year. This arrangement did not escape the attention of a Committee recently reviewing the expenditure of the House of Lords' staff. Vested

interests have been preserved, to the extent that one or two assistant door-keepers on the way to promotion will, when they attain it, receive the same salary. Thereafter the wage of the principal door-keeper in the House of Lords will be £200 a year.

There are probably many poor baronets, not to mention earls' younger sons, who would thankfully take the berth at the reduced scale of payment. Its duties are not exhausting, either to mind or body. Day after day in the early period of the Session, the Lord Chancellor, with full pomp and ceremony, takes the Chair at a quarter-past four. Prayers are read, and a pause for private conversation fills up the time till half-past four, the hour at which public business is appointed to commence. There usually being none, noble lords straightway go home, cheered by the consciousness of having deserved well of their country.

This privilege the door-keepers, of course, share. They also enjoy much longer recess at Easter and Whitsuntide than falls to the lot of their brethren at the door of the Commons. Then there is the long recess of something like five months, during which they sit, the centre of admiring family circles, recalling how the Earl greeted them with "Good-morning!" when it was really twenty-five minutes to five in the afternoon; and what the Royal Duke said (this indicated only by initials) when one day he found another peer had in mistake taken his umbrella.

As far as my memory goes back, and it just touches the time when Mr. White was principal door-keeper, I have found the occupant of the chair a gentle-
The Chief Door-keeper.
 man specially fitted for discharge of its onerous and important

duties. The position is one requiring tact, patience, presence of mind, and unvarying good manner. These are cheap at £300 a year, and the selection of the Serjeant-at-Arms, at least for the quarter of a century that I have had opportunity of closely observing it, has been singularly fortunate.

By chance rather than by ordered progress, the latest chief door-keepers have reached the blue ribbon of the service *via* the Ladies' Gallery. Mr. Wilson, the present incumbent of the chair,¹ is still spoken of kindly by ladies frequenting the gallery in recent Parliaments. The exceptional popularity he secured in the delicate position of custodian of ladies in a chamber where silence is peremptorily imposed has been established with equal universality in the more stirring air of the Lobby.

MR. WILSON, THE DOOR-KEEPER.

The House of Commons is quick to resent anything approaching rude smartness, or attempt on the part of a Minister replying to a question to score off an unoffending member. Inability to recognise this honourable prejudice had a good deal to do with the unpopularity and final downfall of Mr. Ayrton. On the other hand, there are few things delight the House more than a sly hit dexterously dealt by a popular Minister at a too obtrusive member. But the conditions here set forth must be rigorously observed. Moreover, there must be no malice in the quip.

This Session there have been two quiet flashes of this peculiar humour. In the first, the interlocutors were Mr.

Answers that
turn away
Wrath.

¹ Retired in 1904.

Caldwell and the Lord Advocate (Mr. Graham Murray). Students of the Parliamentary reports have no opportunity of realising the individuality of Mr. Caldwell. He has a rich gift of what an eminent American, ^{A "Platitudiniser."} at present on a visit to this country, calls "platitudinising." The word will not be found in the New Oxford Dictionary. But it is most effective as indicating a constant, ever-fed supply of pointless words, wrapped up in cotton-woolly sentences. Amongst other attractions, he has a loud, level voice, a rapid intonation, and an almost inhuman staying power. He can go on talking for two hours just as conveniently as he can gabble through one, and probably will say less to the point than he might by accident have compressed in a spin of sixty minutes.

One day a suffering colleague on the Select Committee on the Scotch Public Health Bill cut a notch on a stick every time Mr. Caldwell rose to make a speech. When the Committee adjourned the stick was found to contain forty-one notches. Of course, the member for Mid-Lanarkshire is never reported, for the managers of newspapers have to consider their interests with the public. That reflection does not lessen the anguish of those who, whether in Select Committee or the House, have to suffer Mr. Caldwell at length.

ry
MR. CALDWELL, M.P.

It was late at night, in debate on a Superannuation Bill, that the Lord Advocate quietly scored off this contribution from Scotland to the business resources of the House. The proposal of the Bill was that superannuation should take place at the age of sixty. Mr. Caldwell, anxious for economy, moved an amendment extending the period for five years.

No man, he argued, ought on the ground of incapacity to be laid on the shelf before he reached the age of sixty-five.

"Oh yes," said the Lord Advocate, sternly regarding Mr. Caldwell; "some persons become incapable long before they are sixty-five."

Members roaring with laughter turned up "Dod," and found that Mr. Caldwell is only fifty-eight.

The second instance this Session is the more welcome as coming from an unexpected quarter. A member put a

question to the Home Secretary as to the ^{Public} Nuisances.

powers of County Councils or other local authorities to deal with the nomad population of gipsies and tinkers living in vans. Sir Matthew White-Ridley replied that provision is made in the Housing of the Working Classes Act to enable local authorities to deal with nuisances caused by dwellers in tents and vans. Mr. Swift MacNeill's ready wit here saw an opportunity of dealing a backhander at the Primrose League, whose agents are accustomed to go about country places in vans.

"Do these powers," he slyly asked, "apply to persons in Primrose League vans?"

SIR MATTHEW WHITE-RIDLEY
IS FUNNY.

"They apply," said the Home Secretary, staring straight at his interlocutor, "only to persons who become nuisances."

The laughter which bubbled round Mr. MacNeill's sally became a universal shout at the Home Secretary's subtle, though effective, retort.

One of the notable points about the Session just closed is the advance made by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach in the esteem

of the House. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ranks amongst the oldest members, having taken his seat for East Gloucestershire in 1864, four years

An Old Boy.

before Sir William Harcourt, who justly counts himself one of the oldest inhabitants. Long ago, Sir Michael made his reputation as a sound debater, a safe administrator. In his fourth Session, Mr. Disraeli, who had a keen eye for capacity, picked him out for a minor Ministerial post. Gradually advancing, he seemed to reach his highest point when, in 1885, he was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. Not at that time, or earlier, has he filled so large a place in the estimation of the House as he has won during the past two

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH.

years. This may in part be due to better health. It may in some measure be traced to the greater ease born of fuller self-confidence following on success. Sir Michael is, undoubtedly, somewhat lighter of touch than was his earlier habitude. Still, in the main, life is to him a serious thing, to be regarded through grave eyes with face unlit by laughter.

Perhaps, after all, he is himself unaltered, and owes fuller success to personal environment. His solid knowledge, his unfaltering consistency, supply sharp contrasts on the Treasury Bench that make members involuntarily turn to him with fuller appreciation.

A country member confides to me a gruesome experience that has befallen him in connection with the discharge of his legislative duties. He did not take a house in town this season, and after some experience of private lodgings, engaged rooms in one of the most

Voices in the Night.

lately built of the palatial hotels that lift their lofty heads above the streets of London. He was much pleased with everything on the first day of his stay. The dinner was excellent, the wine good, if a little dear, the attendance unexceptional, bedroom and sitting-room thoroughly comfortable. He went to bed glowing with pleasure at his good fortune, and soon fell asleep.

How long he slumbered he cannot say, but was awakened by an unfamiliar voice close at his ear. "Are you there?" it shouted.

He certainly was, but was not expecting anybody else. He turned on

THE MIDNIGHT TELEPHONE.

the electric light convenient to his hand, and found he had the room all to himself. Again the voice resounded, this time a little sharply:—

"Are you there?"

Then he grasped the situation. There was a telephone in the room, the latest resource of civilisation, at the disposal of tenants on the first and second floors. It must be urgent business that would call a man up at this time of night—illness at home, perhaps, and urgent recall.

Jumping out of bed, he approached the telephone, through which came again the sharp challenge. "Yes," he replied breathlessly; "who is it?"

"It's me," said the voice. "Come away directly; your uncle's asking for you, and the doctor says he can scarcely last through the night."

The M.P. rapidly reviewed his family relations, and

knew that he had not an uncle anywhere nearer than Baltimore, in distant Maryland.

"Who are you?" he asked, through the telephone. "What's your name?"

"I'm Thompson, the butler, you know," hoarsely whispered the voice. "Mistress says, come away directly, your uncle's asking for you, and the doctor says he can scarcely last through the night."

"There's some mistake," the member signalled back, a little pettishly. It was early in the Session, and the nights were cold. "My name is B——. You're on the wrong connection."

"Oh!" said the voice, in pained surprise, and then there was silence.

The member returned to his couch and was soon asleep again. He seemed only to have dozed when the silence was broken by a well-known voice with the old cry, "Are you there?" Angrily jumping out of bed, he roared through the telephone, "What's the matter now?"

"Your uncle's sinking fast," cried the too familiar voice, now tremulous with emotion. "Mistress says——"

"Go away!" bawled the member; "you're on the wrong line."

The story is too painful to pursue, but as a matter of sober fact, twice before morning broke were the member's slumbers disturbed by the ringing of the telephone bell and the peremptory inquiry, "Are you there?" Whether this was preliminary to further news of his sick uncle he does not know, remaining under the sheets resolutely irresponsive. He made angry remonstrance with the manager on the following morning. The manager was exceedingly sorry, but the connections had got mixed and the member had been awakened to receive some one else's message.

The other day a Royal Academician, a famous portrait painter,¹ made a remark on which I have since hopelessly pondered. He asked if I had noticed the strong facial resem-

¹ Mr. Orchardson.

blance between the Marquis of Salisbury and his nephew,
 the Leader of the House of Commons. At first
 Family
 Likenesses. sight there are, I suppose, no two personages
 more distinct in appearance,—Lord Salisbury, with his
 leonine head, his bowed shoulders, his great girth, his almost
 elephantine trot; Mr. Balfour, with rather small head,
 unchubby cheeks, maypole-like figure, long, swinging stride.

SUBSTANCE AND SHADOW.

In the now little read if not quite forgotten *New Timon* Bulwer Lytton gave to the world a little more than fifty years ago, there is a passage descriptive of O'Connell which applies with graphic accuracy to the Premier of to-day :—

But who, scarce less by every gazer eyed,
 Walks yonder, swinging with a stalwart stride?
 With that vast bulk of chest and limb assign'd
 So oft to men who subjugate their kind;
 So sturdy Cromwell push'd, broad-shoulder'd, on;
 So burly Luther breasted Babylon;
 So brawny Cleon bawl'd his Agora down;
 And large-limb'd Mahmoud clutch'd a Prophet's crown!

This description being curiously applicable to Lord Salisbury, the uncle cannot be said to recall the personality of the nephew. It was simply in respect of the face that

the R.A. made his allegation of strong personal resemblance, supporting it with a wealth of detail whose erudition I will not attempt to chronicle.

Whatever may be the case as between uncle and nephew, there is no doubt that the personal resemblance among offshoots of the Cecil family is remarkable. It does not occur in the case of Lord Cranborne, ^{Cousins and Brothers.} who, whether in personal appearance, manner, or public speech, has no resemblance to his father or his cousins on the front bench of the House of Commons. But Lord Hugh Cecil is in some isolated respects exceedingly like his cousin Arthur. He has many of the inflections of his voice. His phrasing and his general style of speech-making, even to the extent of occasional hesitation for the proper word, and the certainty of finding it, recall Mr. Arthur Balfour's earliest House of Commons efforts whilst he was yet attached to the flank of the Fourth Party. To see Lord Hugh crossing the lobby of the House of Commons, or walking along the street, is to have instantly recalled his most famous cousin. A back view of his figure startlingly resembles the First Lord of the Treasury, the illusion being completed by his long, swinging stride.

LORD HUGH CECIL.

It is probable that, if Lord Hugh retains his health and strength, and spends his days and nights in the House of Commons, he will at no distant day complete the parallel by drawing near to the Parliamentary position of his illustrious kinsman. A man of wide culture, he has also strong convictions, which, whether right or wrong, are rare things much appreciated in the House of Commons. He has in him, moreover, the making of a polished and pungent debater.

In the case of Mr. Arthur Balfour and the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, family resemblance is in one particular development carried to an embarrassing perfection. Mr. Gerald Balfour's voice and inflection of speech are so identical with those of his brother that, entering the House when one or other is on his legs, one has to look towards the Treasury Bench to see who is "up" before deciding the question that presents itself when the voice first strikes on the ear.

SESSION 1898

CHAPTER X

FEBRUARY

IN the leisure of country-house life, and the confidence of the smoking-room, I have enjoyed opportunity of learning the views of a high authority on the delicate question of proximate Premiers on either side. If I were permitted to name the oracle, his expressed views would gain alike in personal interest and in weight. That privilege is withheld ; but I am at liberty to record the dicta, which, though not professing to be a verbatim report of intermittent conversation carried over some period, may be accepted as an accurate record, since it has been seen in proof by the statesman to whom I am indebted for permission to publish the review of the situation as it stands at the opening of a new Session.

“Harcourt will never be Premier,” said my friend, “and, though not personally enamoured of his company, I profoundly regret it. It is an unexpected, undeserved termination of a hard-working, brilliant, and, I believe, purely patriotic career. Harcourt has made great sacrifices of ease, time, and money for the public service. As you know, when he decided upon a political career he deliberately sacrificed a large and increasing income at the Parliamentary Bar. What he has since received in the way of Ministerial salary is probably not equal to six-

Possible
Premiers.

Sir William
Harcourt.

pence in the pound on what he would have netted had he stuck to his work in the Committee-rooms upstairs. As far as Ministerial life is concerned, ill-luck pursued him from the beginning. Scarcely had he, running in double harness with Henry James, worried Gladstone into making him, conjointly with his comrade, a Law Officer of the Crown, than the Liberals were swept out of Downing Street, and remained in the wilderness for six years.

"When in 1893 Mr. G.'s hint at desire to resign the Premiership was somewhat hurriedly snapped at by his stricken colleagues in the Cabinet, Harcourt had good reason to expect that the reversal of the office would fall to him. Perhaps it would, had not his temper been rather

"A TOWERING IMPATIENCE."

Plantagenet than Archbishop. He has a towering impatience of anything approaching—I don't say stupidity, but — mental slowness. At heart he is one of the kindest men in the world. But he has a way of sitting upon people, and, his weight being elephantine, the experience of

"ONE OF THE KINDEST OF MEN."

the sufferer is neither forgettable nor forgivable. The story

"A WAY OF SITTING UPON PEOPLE."

goes that in January 1893 his colleagues in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet with one accord began to make excuse from serving under him as Premier. I don't know whether that's true. But I can testify that, very early in the run of the Rosebery Cabinet, there were persistent rumours of Harcourt's approaching resignation. I took the liberty of asking one of the least excitable of his colleagues whether there was any foundation for the report. 'I don't know what Harcourt is going to do,' he said, 'but I'll tell you what. As things are going now, if he doesn't resign soon, *we* shall.'

"There was evidently a tiff on at the time, which blew over, and they all lived happily after up to the unexpected and, in ordinary circumstances, inadequate cordite explosion.

"Mr. G.'s resignation naturally opened up a prospect of Harcourt's advancement to the vacant post. By common consent he had earned the preferment. There was no one on the Treasury Bench of the House of Commons who might reasonably compete with him. That he should have been passed over in favour of a colleague of less than half his term of service, one who more than a dozen years earlier had actually served as his junior at the Home Office, was sufficient to disturb a temperament more equable than that of the Lord of Malwood. The late-comers to the toil of the vineyard, paid on equal terms with those who had laboured from break of day, were in quite ordinary case compared with Lord Rosebery exalted to the Premiership over the head of Sir William Harcourt. But things were so ordained, and if, whilst acquiescing in the arrangement, Harcourt did not enthusiastically contribute to its success, it must be remembered that, after all, he too is human.

"The bitterness of the case is intensified by consciousness of irrevocable disappointment. It was then or never. It was not then. If he were ten years younger the prospects would be different. The success of leaving him to play second fiddle was not so conducive to harmony as to recommend renewal of the experiment. The present Government will unquestionably live into the next century. In the year 1900 Harcourt will be seventy-three. That, of course, is

not an impossible age for a Premier. When in August 1892, Mr. Gladstone for the fourth time became Prime Minister, he was nearly ten years older. Palmerston did not reach the Premiership till he was in his seventy-first year, and returned to the office when he was seventy-five. Earl Russell was for a few months First Lord of the Treasury at seventy-three. These were exceptional cases, and at best do not supply precedent for a statesman in his seventy-third year for the first time succeeding to the Premiership. What has not been found convenient in past history will not grow more likely of acceptance in the more strenuous political times of the twentieth century. What Mr. G. is accustomed to call the incurable disease of old age will bar Sir William

Harcourt's enjoyment of a justly-earned prize.

"Lord Rosebery is still in the running, but is handi-
capped by ^{Lord} Rosebery.

a disqualification that, when the time of trial comes, will probably prove as fatal as that which, with quite different bearing, hampers his esteemed friend and former colleague. During his brief tenure of No. 10 Downing Street, Rosebery left nothing to be desired from a Prime Minister—nothing save peace and harmony in the Cabinet. In the concurrent office of Leader of the House of Lords he was without a rival,

"A PRISONER IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS,"

a foeman worthy of the sword of the veteran Leader of the

Opposition. Regarded as a public speaker, he was as effective on the platform as in his place in Parliament. In brief, he has but one disqualification for the high position to which he was called. He is a peer. Even with the Conservatives, of whose party the House of Lords is a rampart, the inconvenience of having the Premier outside the House of Commons is acutely felt. With Liberals such an arrangement is a contradiction of first principles.

“That the disqualification should have been overlooked in the case of Lord Rosebery is the supremest recognition of his high capacity and his peculiar fitness for the post. But it is not an experiment that can be tried again. The Liberals can come back to power only as the result of deep stirring of the popular mind such as Mr. G. accomplished on the eve of the General Election of 1880. The militant section of the Liberal electorate, the men who move the army, have distinctly made up their minds that they will not have a peer for Premier, even though his lordship be so sound and thorough-going a Liberal as is the Earl of Rosebery. The Liberal Party, closing up its ranks for a pitched battle, cannot afford to march into the lists with avoidable cause of dissension riving its ranks. If Lord Rosebery were plain Archibald Primrose he would as surely be Prime Minister in the next Liberal Government as it is certain that the whirligig of time will bring its revenges at the poll to the Liberal Party. The Earl of Rosebery is impossible.

“Rosebery’s personal testimony on this point is interesting and conclusive. It will be found in his monograph on Pitt, where, dwelling on the difficulty that surrounds the accident of the Prime Minister being seated in the House of Lords, he writes: ‘It would be too much to maintain that all the members of a Cabinet should feel an implicit confidence in each other; humanity—least of all, political humanity—could not stand so severe a test. But between a Prime Minister in the House of Lords and the Leader of the House of Commons such a confidence is indispensable. Responsibility rests so largely with the one, and articulation so greatly with the other, that unity of sentiment is the one necessary

link that makes the relation, in any case difficult, in any way possible. The voice of Jacob and the hands of Esau may effect a successful imposture, but can hardly constitute a durable administration.'

" Apart from Sir William Harcourt and Lord Rosebery, the Front Opposition Bench is not lacking in men who

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman. would make passable Premiers. Campbell-Bannerman, for example, would be a model Leader of the House of Commons, and a safe Prime Minister. That he should not have come more rapidly

and more prominently to the front is one of the unexpected turns of political life. The main reason is, I believe, that, uninfluenced by a well-known example in other quarters, he lets things slide. Stafford Northcote, harried by Randolph Churchill, once pathetically confessed that he was 'lacking in go.' Campbell-Bannerman is wanting in push. Some one has truly said that if he had been born to a patrimony not exceeding £300 a year, he would long ago have been Leader of the House of Commons. A naturally indolent disposition completes the swamping influence of excessive wealth.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

" Oddly enough, the only occasion since middle age when he felt the blessed influence of personal ambition, and really strived to get himself a place, was when Arthur Peel retired from the Speaker's Chair. Strange as it may seem, Campbell-Bannerman really, almost fervidly, desired to be Speaker. One of the reasons confided to me was quaint. He has a horror of recessional speech-making. When he gets a holiday he likes to have it all the way through. The Speaker is not expected to conciliate his constituents by making speeches in the recess, and Campbell-Bannerman looked

with large desire on an unruffled holiday from the date of the Prorogation to the opening of the new Session. He would have made a Speaker as good as the best of them. He has the judicial mind, the equable manner, the intellectual alertness, the wide political and Parliamentary knowledge indispensable to success in the Chair. He is, moreover, master of that pawky humour grateful to the House of Commons, especially when it edges the sable mantle of the majesty of the Chair. His willingness to accept the office relieved the Government and the House from an awkward position. Whilst ready to fight any one else, the Unionists would have accepted Campbell-Bannerman. It was Harcourt who upset the coach. He raised constitutional objections to a Minister stepping out of the Cabinet into the Speaker's Chair. I believe he even threatened resignation if Campbell-Bannerman insisted upon pressing claims to the Speakership. His colleagues in the Cabinet, appalled by such a prospect, desisted from urging the candidature, and Campbell-Bannerman, possibly not without grateful consciousness of having narrowly escaped a burdensome responsibility, acquiesced.

"Sir Henry Fowler is another thoroughly safe man, perhaps a little too safe to aspire to satisfy the popular idea of a Prime Minister. He is more akin to the type of the present Lord Kimberley, and the late ^{Sir H. Fowler.} Lord Iddesleigh, than to that either of Mr. Disraeli or Mr. Gladstone. Yet few men of less than twenty years' standing in the House of Commons have made such steady advance in their political career as has the ex-Mayor of Wolverhampton. Whatever he has been appointed to do, he has done well. Sometimes, notably in his speech on Henry James's motion raising the question of the Indian Cotton Duties, he has revealed to the House unsuspected depths of statesmanship and debating power. His conduct of the Parish Councils Bill was a masterpiece of adroit Parliamentary management. As an all-round Minister, a dependable man, he has no superior on either Front Bench. I am not sure that that is the type in which successful Prime Ministers are cast. It

might possibly be better for the country if such were the case. But I am dealing with matters as we find them.

"Assuming, of course, that they live and work, I think you will find a future—I do not say absolutely the next—

One of Two. Liberal Prime Minister in one of two of Sir

William Harcourt's colleagues on the Front Opposition Bench. If you ask Asquith which of the two will come out first in the running, he will have no difficulty in deciding. He is not a man who wears his heart upon his

sleeve, nor is he given to vain boasting. Yet eight years ago, whilst he could not be said as yet to have made his mark upon the House of Commons, I heard him, at a friend's dinner table, quietly announce that he intended some day to be Prime Minister. The third party to the conversation was Lord Randolph Churchill, who afterwards agreed with me that the aspiration, bold as it seemed at that time, was by no means improbable of fulfilment.

"What Asquith lacks for the rapid achievement of his settled plan is more blood. Iron he has in plenty, *Mr. Asquith.* and of excellent quality. He is

failing in that sympathetic touch with the multitude which was one of the chief and abiding causes of Mr. G.'s supreme power.

MR. ASQUITH. Asquith addressing a mass of humanity, whether in the House of Commons or from

a public platform, can bring conviction to the mind. He cannot touch the passions. His hard, somewhat *gauche* manner is, I believe, due rather to shyness than to self-assertion. That is a hopeful diagnosis, for it implies the possibility of his sometime letting himself go, with results that will astonish his audience and himself. At present he is too cold-blooded, too canny, to capture the populace.

"It was characteristic of him that, on losing his position as Cabinet Minister and Secretary of State for the Home

Department, he should have gone back to the drudgery of the Bar, to plead before judges whose decisions in matters of life and death he but the day before was empowered to override. The decision was, in some aspects, creditable to him. To an able-bodied, high-spirited man nothing can be more distasteful than the lot of living upon a wife's dowry. Asquith would have done well if he had found any other means of satisfying his honourable instincts. In political life, when running for the highest prizes, the axiom that no man can serve two masters is pitilessly true. Even to attain ordinary success in the House of Commons a man must spend his days and nights in the Chamber. Apart from the conflict of interests and the imperativeness of diverse calls, there is one inexorable matter of fact that makes it impossible for a Leader at the Bar to concurrently fill the place of a Leader in the House of Commons. The House now meets at three o'clock. Public business commences half an hour later, and it frequently happens that the portion of the sitting allotted to questioning Ministers is the most important of the whole. A member absent through the question hour cannot possibly be in close touch with the business of the day. This is more imperatively true in times of storm and stress. It is obvious that, as the Courts of Law do not usually rise before five o'clock, a member of the House of Commons in close attendance on his private business at the Bar cannot be in his place at Westminster during the lively, often critical, episode of questions.

"Knowledge of this detail will help to explain the conviction borne in upon old Parliamentary hands that, in returning to his work at the Bar, Asquith seriously handicapped himself in the race for the Premiership.

"Asquith's only rival in sight among the younger men in the Liberal camp is the grand-nephew of the great Earl Grey. I have heard Mr. G. say Edward Grey Sir Edward Grey. is the only man he knew in the long course of his experience who might be anything he pleased in political life and seemed content to be hardly anything. The public know little of the young member for Berwick-on-Tweed.

The present House of Commons knows little more, and was, perhaps, not deeply impressed by the rare opportunity of forming a judgment supplied towards the close of last Session.

"It is Gladstone and other Nestors of the Party whose profound belief in the young man fixes attention upon him. Here, even more hopelessly than in the case of Campbell-Bannerman, the potentialities of a possibly great career are influenced by total absence of pushfulness. Edward Grey does not want anything but to be left alone, supplied with good tackle, and favoured by fine weather for fishing. He would rather catch a twenty-pound salmon in the Tweed than hook a fat seal of office in the neighbourhood of Downing Street. But he is only thirty-five, just ten years

SIR EDWARD GREY.

younger than Asquith, and no one can say what chances and changes the new century may bring."

It will be perceived that, enjoying the irresponsibility of the pen that merely transcribes *obiter dicta*, I have not attempted to blunt any of their frankness.

The House of Commons was distinctly poorer when on the eve of the General Election of 1895 Sir Isaac Holden resolved not to offer himself for re-election. Sir Isaac Holden. During the recess the world became poorer by his death. He was in various ways a type of the best class of Englishman. His father was a Cumberland man; he was born in Scotland; he lived and worked in Yorkshire. More than thirty years ago, having accumulated a vast fortune, he bent his thoughts on Westminster. He was elected for Knaresborough towards the close of the Session of 1865,

and represented that borough till the General Election of 1868. At the dissolution he flew at higher game, fighting the Eastern Division of the West Riding. But even the high tide that carried Mr. Gladstone into power in 1868 could not establish a Liberal in that Tory stronghold.

Four years later Isaac Holden tried the Northern Division of the West Riding with similar ill-fortune. At the General Election of 1874 he attacked the Eastern Division again, and was again beaten. But he was not the kind of man to accept defeat, whether in dealing with wool-combing machinery or politics. In 1882 he made a dash at the North-West Riding and carried it. At the time of his retirement from Parliamentary life he was seated for the Keighley Division of the same Riding.

SIR ISAAC HOLDEN.

I do not remember hearing Sir Isaac speak during the thirteen years I knew him in the House of Commons. But he was an assiduous attendant upon his Parliamentary duties. Through the turbulent times which saw Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill carried through the House of Commons, there was none among the meagre majority of forty upon whom the Ministerialist whip counted with more certainty than the octogenarian member for Keighley Division. One night when the Bill was being forced through Committee by the automatic action of the closure, Sir Isaac took part in every one of ten divisions the Unionists insisted upon walking through. So high did party feeling run at the moment, that Mr. Villiers came down to the House and voted in the first two rounds taken immediately after ten o'clock, when the closure came into operation. After that, he reasonably thought he had done enough to save his country, and went

1-24

No talker but
a walker.

off home. But though Ninety judiciously retired, two members of more than Eighty stopped to the last, going round and round the lobbies for two hours on a sultry night. One was Mr. Gladstone, then approaching his eighty-fifth year. The other was Isaac Holden, two years the senior of the Premier.

Meeting Sir Isaac after one of the divisions, I asked him if he did not think he would be better in bed.

"Not at all," he said, with his bright smile. "You know, I always walk a couple of miles every night before I go to bed. I have stepped the division lobbies, and find that the length traversed is as nearly as possible 200 yards. You see, if they give us nine divisions, I shall have done a trifle over a mile, and will have so much less to walk on my way home."

As it turned out, ten divisions were taken at this particular sitting, those two young fellows, Mr. Gladstone and Isaac Holden, walking briskly through each one. When it was over, Sir Isaac went out to complete his two miles, taking Birdcage Walk on his way to his rooms in Queen Anne's Mansions.

Much has been said and written about his peculiar dieting. He certainly was most methodical. An orange, a The Secret of baked apple, a biscuit made from bananas, and Long Life. twenty grapes—neither more nor less—made up his breakfast. He dined lightly in the middle of the day, and supped in the bounteous fashion of his breakfast. No whim of this kind was ever more fully justified. Almost up to the last Sir Isaac walked with rapid step, his back as straight as a dart, his eyes retaining their freshness, his cheek its bloom. It was his pride that he had grapes growing all through the year in his vinery at Oakworth House, near Bradford. During his stay in London he had the fruit sent up every day. When, some years ago, I visited him at Oakworth, he was at the time of my arrival out walking on the moor. Coming in, having done his then accustomed seven miles' spin, he insisted upon straightway escorting his guest all over the spacious winter garden. One

of his panaceas for lengthening your days was to live in an equable temperature. Sixty degrees was, he concluded, the right thing, and as he walked about bareheaded he begged me to observe how equable the temperature was. It may have been, but it was decidedly chilly. As he wore no hat I could not keep mine on, and caught a cold that lingered till I left Yorkshire.

Another time, he and I, being neighbours in London, driving home from the house of a mutual friend where we had foregathered at dinner, he stopped the carriage at the top of St. James's Street and got out to walk the rest of the way home. It was raining in torrents, but that did not matter. He had not, up to this time, completed his regulation walk, and it must be done before he went to bed.

Thus day by day he wound himself up with patient regularity, living a pure and beautiful life, dying with all that should accompany old age, as honour, love, obedience, troops of friends. If he suffered any disappointment in his closing hours, it would be because Death came to him at the comparatively early age of ninety-one. One day he told me in the most matter-of-fact manner that, given an ordinary good constitution at birth, there was no reason in the world why a man should not live to celebrate his hundredth birthday.

At Folkestone the other day, I came across a tradition of the time

"The Noble when Baron de Worms,
Baron." then a member of the

House of Commons, was an occasional resident on the Leas. Com-

"A BARON OF HIGH DEGREE."

Combining business with pleasure, he, on one occasion, took part in a political meeting in anticipation of the General Election

of 1892, which meant so much to him and to others. "The noble baron," as the late Sir Robert Peel, in a flash of that boisterous humour that delighted the House of Commons, once called the member for the East Toxteth Division of Liverpool, desirous of casting a glamour of ancient nobility over the cause of the friend it was his object to serve, dwelt with pardonable pride on his own lineage.

"My brothers are barons," he said ; "my great grandfather was a baron ; my grandfather was baron ; my father was baron."

"Pity your mother wasn't," cried a voice from the crowd.

CHAPTER XI

MARCH

LAST month I was privileged to be the confidant of the opinion of an eminent publicist on the chances and probabilities of the next Liberal Premier. The conversation, or, to be more precise, the monologue, later extended to the Conservative field. Here, as before, my part is absolutely confined to the humble duty of recorder. I can only repeat that if I were at liberty to mention the name of the authority for these *obiter dicta* they would gain alike in personal interest and in political importance.

More Smok-
ing-room
Confidences.

"The question of who is to be the next Conservative Premier is one," my Mentor said, "more likely to present itself on an early day than is the other we have been talking about. Lord Salisbury is not of a resigning disposition. 'I will never,' he has wittily said, 'consent to be in politics the Dowager Lord Salisbury.' He is a man of indomitable pluck, with a high sense of his duty to his country, and an honest conviction that it is most completely performed when Robert Cecil has his hand on the helm of State. But no one who watched him in the House of Lords last Session, or who has had personal dealings with him during the past six months, can fail to perceive that the state of his health leaves much to the desire of his many friends and innumerable admirers. At best he is not likely to form a Fourth Administration. Inevitably within a year or two the Conser-

vative Party will be face to face with the necessity of electing a new Leader.

"I fancy when Goschen finally made up his mind to cross the Rubicon, on the marge of which he had long dallied, he was not free from expectation that some day
Mr. Goschen. he might be called upon to lead the Tory Party. When he went over, Arthur Balfour was untried ; Hartington



748

THE UNEXPECTED FOOTPRINT.

had declared against fusion of the two elements of the Unionist Party ; whilst Chamberlain was yearning after what he called a Nationalist Party, presumably made up of Jesse Collingeses and Powell Williamses. It was quite on the cards when Goschen delivered the Conservatives from the dilemma

in which Randolph Churchill's defection left them that events might so shape themselves as to bring him to the Leadership of the House of Commons. Events took other shapes, notably in the development of Arthur Balfour into a first-class Leader. Hence Goschen's opportunity has finally eluded his grasp. So far from leading the party, it is doubtful whether the inexorable age-limit will not preclude his inclusion in the next Conservative Ministry, whenever, by whomsoever, it is formed. No one recognises that fact more clearly than does the present First Lord of the Admiralty, and none will accept the situation with greater dignity.

"Failing Arthur Balfour, the man on the Treasury Bench whom the Conservative Party of all sections would hail with acclamation as Leader is Hicks-Beach. In matters Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. of fact, especially of finance, he is more reliable than his more brilliant colleague, the First Lord of the Treasury. Against the ultimate supremacy of Chamberlain he offers a barrier which good Conservatives fondly contemplate. 'If,' they say to each other, 'anything were to happen to Arthur Balfour, Joe would be inevitable save for Hicks-Beach.'

"That is a fresh bond between this upright, stiff-backed, uncompromising Conservative country gentleman and the party whose best instincts and habits he worthily represents.

"It is too soon to speak of UPRIGHT AND STIFF-BACKED. George Curzon. But if there did not hang over him the extinguisher of a coronet, I should confidently look for him seated in due time in the place of the Leader of the House of Mr. Curzon. Commons, with the Premiership to follow. He holds on the Treasury Bench a position closely analogous to that of Edward Grey in the Opposition camp. Young, of good

birth, impelled by Parliamentary instincts, a clear thinker, a forcible speaker, he has the advantage over his predecessor at the Foreign Office that he means to get to the top of the Parliamentary ladder. It is the fashion among some people to sneer at his superior manner and alleged affectation of speech. These superficial judges regard him as a sort of Parliamentary dandy. Wherein they are mightily mistaken. George Curzon is not physically a strong man, though hard work happily agrees with him, and since he went to the Foreign Office his health has been better than at any time since he left Oxford. But confronted with what he regarded as the duty of mastering the Eastern Question, he set out on an arduous journey, visiting Persia, Siam, Central Asia, Indo-China, and the Corea, scaling the Pamirs, making a morning call on the Ameer at a time when Cabul was in unrest, and the Khyber Pass promised to renew its old character as a death-trap for adventurous Englishmen.

"A man that goes to work in this fashion is the kind out of which able Ministers are made. Met in a drawing-room or seen lolling on the Treasury Bench, George Curzon looks a lath. He is really a blade of tempered steel, and will go far.¹ The pity of it is that his father is a peer, and he the eldest son.

"These reflections deal with contingencies at present remote. The actual competition for the Leadership of the Constitutional Party lies between the nephew of
**Mr. Balfour
and Mr.
Chamberlain.** the Marquis of Salisbury and the ex-Mayor of once Radical Birmingham, the Jack Cade of Stafford Northcote's startled fancy, the politician who in 1885 affrighted staid Liberals with his unauthorised programme.

"The surprise of such a position of affairs is so dazzling in the case of Mr. Chamberlain as to obscure all lesser lights. Nevertheless, Mr. Arthur Balfour's contribution is part of the romance of political life. There were none even among the far-seeing who, sixteen or even a dozen years ago, ventured to predict the Arthur Balfour of to-day. The Leader of the present House of Commons has been a member for

¹ Since this was written he has proved himself one of the most successful Viceroys known to the history of India.

nearly a quarter of a century, and though perennially young, may commence to reckon himself among the old stagers. In his first Parliament, from 1874 to 1880, so far from having made a mark, he passed absolutely unrecognised.

THE RACE FOR THE LEADERSHIP.

Very early in the next Parliament, incited by the vitality of Lord Randolph Churchill and his colleagues of the Fourth Party, the young member for Hertford began to come to the front."

[The first note made of his appearance by a long-time student of Parliamentary men and manner bears date August 20, 1880. As it was placed on public record at the time, I may quote it here without risk of accusation of being wise after the event. "The member for Hertford," it was then written in the *Diary of the Gladstone Parliament*, "is one of the most interesting young men in the House. He is not a good speaker, but he is endowed with the rich gift of conveying the impression that presently he will be a successful Parliamentary debater, and that in the meantime it is well he should practise. He is a pleasing specimen of the highest form of the culture and good breeding which

stand to the credit of Cambridge University. He is not without desire to say hard things of the adversary opposite, and sometimes yields to the temptation. But it is ever done with such sweet and gentle grace, and is smoothed over by such earnest protestation of innocent intention, that the adversary rather likes it than otherwise.”]

“At the date of publication,” said my Mentor, to whom I showed the note, “that would doubtless be regarded as a somewhat exaggerated estimate of Balfour’s position and potentiality. He was, in truth, then looked upon as a sort of fragile ornamentation of the hard-headed, hard-working Fourth Party. They suffered him, liked him, but could very well do without him. In his first Ministerial office as Secretary for Scotland, Balfour did not stir the pulses of the House. His chance came when illness drove Hicks-Beach from the Irish Office, and a belated Premier was peremptorily called upon to find a successor. From the very first, Arthur Balfour set his back against the wall and let it be seen that if the Irish members wanted fight, here was a man who would give them plenty. From the time he went to the Irish Office up to the present day, he has, with occasional temporary lapses due to physical lassitude and exhausted patience, steadily pressed forward. On the death of W. H. Smith he was the inevitable Leader of the House of Commons, and took his seat on the Treasury Bench, with Randolph Churchill finally out of the running, John Gorst in subordinate office under him, Drummond Wolff comfortably shelved in Ambassadorial quarters. Thus shall the last be first, and the first last.

“Arthur Balfour is, as he deserves to be, popular with the Conservative Party. I should say his personal popularity exceeds that of any of his colleagues, not except-
Mr. Chamber-
lain. ing the Prime Minister. Lord Salisbury is highly esteemed in the City of London, now, as Goschen must sometimes reflect with surprise, the beating heart of British Toryism. I well remember a time when Arthur Balfour in his chivalrous manner made excuses for non-attendance at Lord Mayors’ Banquets and the like, being

painfully embarrassed by the exuberance of a reception which thrust his uncle for the time into the second place.

"Of the many causes of his popularity with good Conservatives this stands forth with supremest force: 'Arthur Balfour,' they say, 'keeps Joe out of the Leadership.' That, I fancy, is as near the exact truth as club axioms run. If Arthur Balfour were to-morrow to be removed from the House of Commons, Chamberlain would, within possibly a decent interval of twelve months of Hicks-Beach, be seated in the place of Disraeli and of Sir Robert Peel. For a long time after his secession from the Liberal camp I personally clung to the conviction that, however

IN THE PLACE OF DISRAELI.

far he might go in his opposition to Gladstone and to those who remained faithful to the old chief, he would never appear in public and in history as Leader of the Party of which he was up to January 1886 the most violent denouncer, the most relentless foe. I have to-day no particle of such faith. I do not believe Chamberlain's Radical instincts and convictions have faded by a shade. But I perceive he has convinced himself that they may, for all practical purposes, be just as well exploited from the Conservative camp as from the Liberal. The Conservative Party, scarcely yet recovered from the surprise of their majority, having passed the Workmen's Compensation Bill of last Session, and with other kindred memories crowding upon them, perceive that Chamberlain is, as usual, pretty correct. Ever since he went over to help them they have feared him more than they have

loved him. They will not, save *in extremis*, accept him as Leader. Chamberlain, not unconscious of this prejudice, may console himself with reflection on the fact that, fifty years ago, analogous circumstances existed with at least equal bitterness to the detriment of Disraeli, who yet lived to become not only the Leader but the idol of the Tory Party.

"Still, there is always Arthur Balfour, over whom no deadly peerage hangs, and who is twelve years younger than his esteemed friend and admired colleague, the Secretary of State for the Colonies."

Although the Session is nearly a month old the House of Commons has not yet grown accustomed to the absence of Frank Lockwood. His burly figure with its more than 6 ft. of height was not easy to miss in a crowd. Superadded were a sunny countenance and a breezy manner, that made their influence promptly felt.

The position finally secured by Lockwood in Parliamentary debate disappointed some of his friends, who looked for fuller development of his great gifts. Lockwood himself felt somehow he ought to have done better. But the situation did not affect his loyal esteem for the House of Commons, a feeling deepening almost to personal affection. He had good cause to be satisfied with his success at the Bar. He would have bartered a large slice of it for a stronger hold on the House of Commons. That he did not secure it was due to temperament rather than to lack of capacity. He was, up to the last, afraid of the House, a superstition that had to some extent the effect of paralysing his powers. If he could have flung himself into Parliamentary debate with the same *abandon* that he tackled a witness in court or addressed a common-law jury, he would have carried all before him at Westminster, as was his wont in the Courts of Justice. He was aware of this curious failing, and strove to overcome it, with increased success, notably in his last Session. In a brief rejoinder or in a remark flung across the table in debate he equalled his own renown. When taking part in set debate, he felt it due to the House

of Commons to make elaborate preparation, and the more prolonged the labour the less striking was the measure of success.

It is quite true, as was stated at the time of his death, that Frank Lockwood, regarding the world as his oyster, resolved to open it from the stage of the theatre.

The lady who is now Mrs. Kendal helped him **His First Brief.** to engagement with a travelling company of players. His explanation of his reason for withdrawing from the alluring prospect of histrionic success was the chagrin that filled his breast on regarding the bills at the theatre door and on the walls of the towns the troupe visited.

"There was," he said, in indignant tones, belied by the twinkle in his eye, "Miss This and Mr. That, in letters half a foot long, whilst my name was incidentally mentioned in smallest type at the end of the list. When I looked at the bill I felt my vocation had nothing to do with the call-boy at the theatre."

Mrs. Kendal did something better than help Lockwood on to the stage. She obtained for him his first brief, which at her personal entreaty was sent by Sir Albert Rollit, then in business as a solicitor at Hull.

In the House of Commons, as at the Courts of Justice, Lockwood was as well known for his sketches as for his wise and witty sayings. His drawings lacked the **His Sketches.** finish that made possible reproduction in pages of established artistic merit. But they were full of humour, with rare knack of hitting off the situation. The execution was remarkably swift. Many a time through the Session Lockwood came to me with suggestion of treatment of some episode adaptable for *Punch*. Having discussed the matter, he would withdraw to one of the writing-tables in the division lobby, returning in five or six minutes with a bright sketch. It was one of his most cherished ambitions to draw for *Punch*. His sketches were usually redrawn by a more practised hand. But the fun was all there in the hurried sketches on House of Commons note-paper, or waste places on briefs, of which hundreds are scattered about among the

possessions of his friends. The only fee Lockwood sought for his really valuable *Punch* work was that he should be placed on a footing of equality with the staff, and receive an early copy of the week's number. Of this privilege he was gleefully proud.

His pen, travelling rapidly over the sheet, was wonderful at catching a likeness, with just sufficient caricature to make

*He
proposes to take back with him
the Attorney General as a
Missionary*

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER LED CAPTIVE.
From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

it more attractive for the friends of the model. His favourite subjects in the House of Commons were Sir Richard Webster and Sir Robert Reid, whose gravity of mien had irresistible fascination for him.

At the time of the last visit to London of the Shah there was some talk of his authorising missionary enterprise in Persia. This suggested to Lockwood's vivid imagination a picture of Sir Richard Webster led captive by his business-like Majesty *en route* for Teheran.

Another pair of sketches commemorates a famous sentence in a speech by Mr. Robert Spencer, delivered in debate on a Bill affecting the agricultural labourer. In one

*"I am not—
"an agricultural
"labourer"*

*From a Sketch by the late
Sir Frank Lockwood.*



"BOBBY," AS HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

*From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank
Lockwood.*

sketch we have "Bobby," as the sometime member for Mid-Northamptonshire was affectionately called, standing at the table of the House of Commons arrayed in the last resources of civilisation as provided in the tailor's shop, diffidently deprecating the possible assumption that he was an agricultural labourer. In the other we see him got up as he probably would have ordered matters had he been born to the estate of Hodge, instead of to that of the Spencer earldom.

In another sketch that bears no date, but evidently was circulated about the time of a Lobby incident, in which an Irish M.P. and a well-known artist in black-and-white figured, Lockwood illustrated the following extract from a leading article which appeared in the pages of the *Daily Telegraph*:—

If one could imagine so untoward a proceeding as, say, Mr. Henry Lucy slapping the face of Mr. Frank Lockwood in the Lobby of the House of Commons, the issue would be very different. It

Brawler. Beware!!

From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

would not be the insulted M.P. who would be ordered to move on, but the brawling journalist who would be removed. The gigantic personality of Mr. Inspector Horsley would intervene with neatness and dispatch.

He sent the sketch to me with the injunction, "Brawler, Beware!"

In a letter dated from Lennox Gardens, 21st July 1894, he writes:—

MY DEAR LUCY—Don't you think that when Haldane and I spoke on Thursday night it was something like Preachers on probation—the calm and philosophical and the fire and fury?—Yours ever,

FRANK LOCKWOOD.

The note enclosed the two sketches next reproduced, illustrating the theme. As a portrait, Mr. Haldane's is not



The fire & fury.

From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

The calm & philosophical.

From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

so successful as some. But Lockwood's own is capital, and shows how freely he extended to himself that measure of humorous exaggeration he was accustomed to bestow upon others.

The late Lord Chief Justice was another tempting subject. Lord Coleridge, dining one evening at Lennox Gardens, was much interested in the overflowing gallery of portraits of contemporaries at the Bar and on the Bench, drawn by this facile pen. "But, Mr. Lockwood," said Lord Coleridge, "you don't seem to have attempted me." "The

fact is," said Lockwood, relating the story, "I had come home early from the Courts, and spent an hour hiding away, in anticipation of his visit, innumerable portraits I had done of the Chief."

His first important pictorial work is bound up in the volumes of evidence taken when he sat as Commissioner in an election inquiry heard at Chester nearly twenty years ago. With the red and blue pencils supplied by a confiding

with Sir Frank & Lady Lockwood's
by
2

From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

State, Lockwood illustrated the broad margins of the printed evidence with an illimitable procession of witnesses and scenes in court. As far as I know, that is the only case where he used other media than pen and ink for his sketches. For many years he superseded the ordinary Christmas card by sending to his friends a sketch drawn with his own hand. Here is a reproduction of the last one designed, in serene unconsciousness of the shadow hanging over the happy household and the far-reaching circle of friends and acquaintances.

In conversation with his friends, Lockwood did not hide the desire of his heart. He wanted to be a judge. Although a diligent attendant at the House of Commons, and always ready to serve his party with a speech in the country, he was by no means a keen politician. When a man of his native ability becomes Solicitor-General, there is no reason why he should not look forward to steadily walking up the ladder till he reaches the Woolsack. Lockwood would have been content at any time during the last two years of his life to step aside to the quiet dignity of the Bench.

The estimation in which he was held in the House of Commons was testified to on the retirement of Mr. Peel from the Chair by his name being prominently mentioned in succession to the Speakership. He would have admirably filled the Chair, and was, I have reason to know, ready to take it had acceptance been pressed upon him. But the project blew over, and through a curious avenue of chances, his old friend, Mr. Gully, came to the opportunity, modestly accepted, splendidly utilised.

CHAPTER XII

APRIL

The advancement of Lord Halsbury to the status of an Earl was succeeded by a rumour that the event was

preliminary to his retirement from the Woolsack. Up to the present time of writing no sign in that direction has been made, his lordship still lending the grace and dignity of his presence to the House of Lords. It cannot be said by the boldest flatterer that Sir Hardinge Giffard's advancement to the Woolsack was due entirely, or to any extent appreciably, to Parliamentary success whether in the Commons or in the Lords. The former was

THE EARL OF HALSBURY.

necessarily the stepping-stone to his high preferment. But he never made his mark in debate. It is therefore well to know, particularly pleasant to record, the opinion of those brought

in contact with him in his judicial capacity—that Lord Halsbury is supremely capable as a judge.

The first time I was privileged to look upon the Lord Chancellor and hear him speak dates back some thirty years. At that time I was trying my 'prentice hand on a country newspaper, and had been deputed to ^{Mr. Hardinge} report the proceedings taken before the Shrop- ^{Giffard and} ^{Governor Eyre.} shire magistrates against Governor Eyre, in the matter of what were known as the Jamaica massacres. Mr. Fitzjames Stephen, afterwards raised to the judicial Bench, prosecuted ex-Governor Eyre, who was defended by Mr. Giffard. The inquiry, upon which the eyes of the civilised world were fixed, took place in a little courtroom in the sleepy town of Market Drayton. The chairman of the Bench of magistrates was Sir Baldwin Leighton, for years member for South Shropshire, who has bequeathed to the present House the member for the Oswestry Division of the county.

Mr. Giffard threw himself into the defence with an energy not to be accounted for by the fee marked on his brief. The case was one in which political partisanship was deeply engaged, the Conservatives backing up Governor Eyre in his vindication of what in later times, in a nearer island, came to be known as Law and Order, whilst Liberals, especially the more advanced section, strenuously called for the Governor's conviction on a criminal charge. Mr. Giffard, though preaching to the converted, addressed Sir Baldwin Leighton and his fellow-magistrates at merciless length. I remember how at one point, having pictured Governor Eyre protecting the lives entrusted to him by the Queen from fiendish outrage, barbarity, and lust, the learned counsel passionately asked ^{"IS THIS JUSTICE?"} whether for doing that the Governor was to be persecuted to death. "Good God!" he cried, "is this justice?" and answered his question by bursting into tears.

It was a touching episode, a little marred by Sir Baldwin Leighton's naïveté. Slowly recovering from the depth of his emotion, the learned counsel apologised for his weakness.

"Oh, don't mention it," said Sir Baldwin; "but will you be much longer? Because, if you will, we had better go to lunch now."

The ludicrousness of the contrast—a sturdy Queen's Counsel in tears, and a prim Chairman of Quarter Sessions thinking of his luncheon—spoiled the effect of an otherwise powerful passage. The remark was made with such chilling artlessness that Mr. Giffard, drying his eyes and resuming his natural voice, went out with the crowd to luncheon.

Eleven years elapsed before I saw Hardinge Giffard again. It was in the spring of 1877, when the defender of

*A deadly
Dilemma.*

Governor Eyre, having been made Solicitor-General in Mr. Disraeli's Government, came to be sworn in. He had a hard tussle before being privileged to cross the bar. For the preceding eighteen months he

went about from place to place wherever vacancies occurred, looking for a seat. Defeated in succession at Cardiff, Launceston, and Horsham, a second vacancy occurring in the Cornish borough, he stood again and got in by a small majority.

"THE LOST WRIT."

Ill-luck pursued him over the threshold of the House. Arrived at the table, Sir Erskine May, then Clerk of the House, made the customary demand for the return to the writ. Sir Hardinge Giffard forthwith, amid a scene of uproarious merriment, proceeded to search for it. First of all he attacked his breast coat-pocket, which proved to be

bulging with letters and documents of various kinds. These he spread on the table, littering it as if a mail-bag had accidentally burst on the premises. Not finding the return there, he dived into his coat-tail pockets on either side, the merriment of a crowded House rising at sight of his perturbed face and hurried gestures. The document was not to be found among the papers that filled his coat-tail pockets, in quantity excelled only by the stuffing at his breast.

Having got to the end of the tether, the Solicitor-General stood helpless at the table, looking at the inexorable Clerk, who made no advance towards administering the oath pending the production of the return to the writ. Sir William Dyke, Ministerial Whip, who had brought up the new member, struck by a happy thought, bolted down the floor of the House, and, reconnoitring the seat below the gallery the new member had occupied before being called to the table, found the missing document quietly reposing in the Solicitor-General's hat. He brought it up and, amid cheering as wild as if he had won the Victoria Cross, the member for Launceston was sworn in.

Politics apart, it is unquestionably pleasing to the public mind that Mr. Gladstone should close his long and illustrious

Sir William
Gladstone,
K.O. career a plain
citizen as he began
it. To many "Mr.

Disraeli" is a more illustrious style than is the "Earl of Beaconsfield." It seemed somehow natural that the author of *Coningsby*, and of that less-known but even more remarkable work, *Early Letters to his Sister*, should,

when opportunity presented itself, place a coronet on his own brow. Mr. Gladstone, following early exemplars, Mr. Canning and Sir Robert Peel, is content to be known amongst men by the simple name

"PLACING A CORONET ON HIS BROW."

of his fathers. Peel, it is true, had the title of a baronet, but that was not his fault or his seeking, being part of the family hereditaments. Mr. Gladstone's father also was a baronet, but the title descended over the younger son's head, and no accident marred the majestic simplicity of plain "Mr."

Had he pleased, he might at any time during the past quarter of a century have taken rank as a peer. Happily,



"NOLO CORONARI."

all his instincts and impulses have been opposed to submission to that form of mediocrity. But there is one rank and title, the supremest open to a commoner, which Mr. Gladstone might accept without derogation.

The style of a Knight

of the Garter would, as far as common speech and ordinary address are concerned, slightly vary the proud simplicity of the name he has borne since he went to the University. The Order is encumbered with surplusage in the way of foreign Royalty, but it is the highest guerdon of the class open to an Englishman, and has always been reckoned as a prize of distinguished political services. Of Knights of the Garter who have fought by the side of or in front of Mr. Gladstone during the last sixty years, mentioning them in the order of their investment, are Earl Spencer, Earl Cowper, the Duke of Richmond, Lord Ripon, Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Argyll, Lord Kimberley, the Duke of Rutland, Lord Cadogan, the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Rosebery, Lord Lansdowne, and the Earl of Derby. Of this list Mr. Gladstone has of his personal initiative made Knights of six.

The noblest Knight of all is not named upon the roll. Granting the existence of a strong and widely-spread popular feeling of satisfaction that Mr. Gladstone, springing from the ranks of the people, has, like the Shunamite woman, been

content to dwell among them, I believe few events would cause such a thrill of national satisfaction as the announcement that, under gentle pressure from Lord Salisbury, Mr. Gladstone had accepted the Garter.

Who will write the Life of Mr. Gladstone when the time comes for the stupendous task to be undertaken? Mr. John Morley's name is sometimes mentioned in *The Gladstone Memoirs* connection with the work. It seems too big a thing to be approached single-handed. Fairly to grapple with the task would require the combined effort of a syndicate of skilled writers. The amount of material is even greater than may be surmised from outside contemplation of Mr. Gladstone's long and always busy life. He has preserved for more than sixty years all papers and correspondence that might properly serve the purposes of a memoir. They are stored in a fire-proof room at Hawarden—in what precise order was indicated by an incident that happened a few years ago. Reference was made in Mr. Gladstone's presence to an episode in the life of Cardinal Newman. He remembered that his old friend had, half a century earlier, written him a letter bearing on the very point. He undertook to find it, and did so, apparently without any trouble. It was dated 1843.

Talking about the writing of memoirs, Mr. Gladstone once emphatically expressed to me the opinion that the publication of a memoir, to be a full success, should promptly follow on the death of the subject. He did not cite it, but there is a well-known instance in support of his argument. For more than half a century the world had to wait for publication of the correspondence of Talleyrand. When at length it came out it fell as flat as if the letter-writer had been a grocer at Autun or a tailor in Paris.

It is now certain that Disraeli's Life, if ever published, will have to run the risk of failure by reason of delay. Lord Rowton will certainly never undertake accomplishment of the task left to his discretion by his friend *Mr. Disraeli* and leader. No one else has access to the papers—and there are boxes full of them—without whose assistance it

would be impossible to accomplish the work. This is rather hard on the present generation, who must needs forego the pleasure of reading what should be one of the most fascinating books of the century.

On the death of Mr. Villiers, the *Times* made haste to proclaim Mr. W. B. Beach, member for the Andover Division of Hants, successor to the honoured position of Father of the House of Commons. That is a conclusion of the matter not likely to be accepted with unanimous consent. The Father of the House is, by

The Father of
the House of
Commons.

a rare combination of claims, Sir John Mowbray, member for Oxford University. Returned for Durham in 1853, he has continuously sat in Parliament four years longer than Mr. Beach, who came in as member for North Hants in 1857. Sir John has sat in eleven Parliaments against Mr. Beach's ten. He has, in this comparison, all to himself the honour of having been a Privy Councillor for forty years. He has held office under three Administrations, Lord Derby being his chief in 1858 and '66, Mr. Disraeli in 1868. For twenty-four years he has acted as Chairman of the Committee on Standing Orders and of the Committee of Selection. That is a record unique in the present Parliament, and it has been carried

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY.

through with steady acquisition of personal popularity almost as rare.

It is presumable that the judgment of the *Times* has gone against Sir John Mowbray on the ground that he has not during his long membership represented the same constituency. Entering the House as member for Durham, he, in 1868, transferred his services to Alma Mater, a safe

and honourable seat he retains to this day. It is quite true that Mr. Villiers and his predecessor, Mr. Talbot, uninterruptedly held their several seats at the time they came into succession to the Fathership. But I am not aware of any definite ruling on that point. If there were such Mr. Beach would be disqualified, for, coming into the House in 1857 as member for North Hants, he now sits, and has sat since 1875, as member for the Andover Division of the county.

Whilst nothing is said in the written or unwritten law about the Father of the House necessarily having sat uninterruptedly for the same constituency, it is ^{Pères} required that he shall have continuously sat in ^{Possibles.} the House from the date at which his claim commences. It was this rule that placed Mr. Gladstone out of court. First elected for Newark in 1832, he would have taken precedence of Mr. Villiers in the honourable rank but for the hiatus of some eighteen months in his Parliamentary career which followed on his leaving Newark on the way to Oxford University. This gave Mr. Villiers his chance, though the date of his entering the House is three years later than that of Mr. Gladstone.

In the present House, Sir John Mowbray is the only relic of the Parliament of 1852 the course of Time has left to Westminster. Recent deaths and retirements removed several well-known members who otherwise would, on the death of Mr. Villiers, have come in competition for the Fathership. Of these are Sir Charles Forster, Sir Rainald Knightly, Sir Hussey Vivian, and Mr. Whitbread, who all sat in the Parliament of 1852.

One thinks with kindly recognition of what a pathetic figure-head of a Father Sir Charles Forster would have made, wandering about corridors and lobbies in search of the hat he, through a long and honourable career, persistently mislaid.

To the full success of a Ministry a variety of quality in its constituent parts contributes. The more varied the basis the brighter the prospect of prosperity. In Her Majesty's

present Government not the least distinguished, or least popular, Cabinet Minister is said to be gifted with an accomplishment that would have obtained for him brevet rank with our Army in Flanders. To look at him seated on the Treasury Bench, to hear him addressing the House, above all to watch him repairing to his parish church on peaceful Sabbath mornings, no one would suspect this particular accomplishment. I have no personal acquaintance with it, but I have heard the fact stated by so many intimates of the right hon. gentleman, that I fear there is some foundation for the assertion.

It certainly receives confirmation from the recent experience of a member of the Ministerial rank-and-file. A short time ago there was some ruffle of discontent in the well-drilled ranks immediately behind the Treasury Bench. This esteemed member, an eminent solicitor, a severe church-goer, who is accustomed to fancy himself in debate, and to

estimate at its proper value the position of a member representing a populous centre of industry, volunteered to bring the matter personally under the notice of the Cabinet. The particular member of that august body selected for the confidence was the right honourable gentleman whose name wild horses will not drag from me. It was agreed that, whilst the Minister should not be troubled with the attendance of a deputation, half-a-dozen of the malcontents should accompany their spokesman to the door of his private room, remaining in the corridor whilst the interview took place.

“AFTER THE INTERVIEW.”

The spokesman bravely marched into the room, pride in his port, his attitude being perhaps generously tempered by

consideration of the pain he was about to give an esteemed Leader. His fellow-conspirators began to stroll up and down the lobby expectant of having to wait some time whilst the matter at issue was being discussed between their spokesman and the Minister. In a surprisingly short time their representative issued from the Minister's door with a scared look on his expressive visage.

"Well?" said the deputation, eagerly.

"Well," replied the spokesman, with a pathetic break in his voice. "I don't think I've been very well treated by either side since I entered the House of Commons. But I was never before called a d—d canting attorney."

In addition to Mr. Villiers', another familiar face vanished during the recess from House and Lobby is that of Osborne Morgan. Returned for Denbighshire at the historic General Election of 1868, he had come Osborne
Morgan. to rank amongst the oldest members. Only a year ago he sent me a list of members sitting in the present House of Commons who also had seats in the House that disestablished the Irish Church and brought in the first Irish Land Bill. I forget the precise number, but it was startlingly small.

Like Sir Frank Lockwood, but for other reasons, Osborne Morgan did not fulfil expectation reasonably entertained of his Parliamentary success. Early in the fifties he went to the Bar, having gained a brilliant reputation and several scholarships at his University. Like Mr. Gladstone, he to the last, amid whatever pressure of modern daily life, preserved ever fresh his touch with the classics. Trained in law, fed from the fount of literature (ancient and modern), gifted with fluent speech that sometimes surged in flood of real eloquence, he was just the man who might be counted upon to captivate the House of Commons. The melancholy fact is, that when he rose he emptied it.

His conspicuous failings as he stood at the table were lack of humour and a style of elocution fatally reminiscent of the uninspired curate in fine frenzy preaching. Yet, when he spoke from the platform he was a real force. Mr.

Gladstone, accustomed to his failures in the House of Commons, spoke in private with unqualified admiration of a speech he chanced to hear him deliver at a crowded political meeting in North Wales. This dual character Osborne Morgan shared in common with the counsellor of Kings, the sustainer of Sultans, who represents one of the divisions of Sheffield. The House of Commons insists on making Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett a butt, and in regarding him as a bore. Inasmuch as his advocacy of any particular question has effect upon this uncompromisingly critical audience, it is hurtful rather than helpful to his client. Yet I have heard upon competent authority that on the platform, even faced by hard-headed Yorkshiremen, "Silomo" is a really effective speaker.

The doctors gave an orthodox name to the sickness of which Osborne Morgan died. What really killed him was

disappointment suffered
when, in August 1892, Judge
Advocate-
General.
Mr. Gladstone formed his

last Administration. I do not know what he expected, but he was certainly mortally offended when offered his old post of Judge Advocate-General, even though it was considerably gilded with a baronetcy. He hotly declined the office, and when Mr. Gladstone, with patient benignity, pressed the baronetcy upon him, he would have none of it. It was only after the lapse of several days, when his ruffled plumage had been smoothed down by the friendly hands of two of his old colleagues, that he accepted the friendly offer. A warm-hearted, kindly-natured, hot-headed Welshman, those best liked Osborne Morgan who knew him best. He combined

THE LATE SIR G. O. MORGAN.

in his person in fullest measure the attributes of a scholar and a gentleman.

Though, as is admitted, Osborne Morgan was not conspicuous for a sense of humour, he found grim enjoyment in recital of a true story. Travelling up to "G.O.M." London one early spring day to resume his Parliamentary duties, he was conscious of a certain pride in a new portmanteau to which he had treated himself. It was

THE NEW PORTMANTEAU.

fine and large, and carried in bold relief his initials—G. O. M. On arriving at Paddington, he found his prized possession had been subjected to an outrage comparable only with the Bulgarian atrocities which at the time Mr. Gladstone was denouncing with flaming eloquence. Some patriot Jingo, seeing the initials, and confusedly associating them with the Grand Old Man, had whipped out his knife and cut away from the unoffending portmanteau the hateful letters.

Sir William Harcourt, with his present colleague on the Front Opposition Bench, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman. Others of this year are Mr. A. H. Brown, the gallant ex-Cornet, who represents a division of Shropshire in

the present Parliament; Mr. J. Round (Essex), Mr. Chaplin, Colonel Sir E. Gourley, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Staveley Hill, and Mr. J. G. Talbot. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, though he does not look it, is an older member than any of these, having taken his seat in 1864. Sir William Hart Dyke, Sir Joseph Pease, and Mr. M. Biddulph date from 1865. Mr. Abel Smith (I am

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY.

not quite sure whether he has yet made his maiden speech) came in in 1866. Sir John Kennaway goes back to 1870. Of the 1874 brand are Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Burt, Sir Charles Cameron, Mr. T. F. Halsey, Mr. F. C. Morgan, Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Ritchie, and Mr. C. H. Wilson, member for Hull in the present Parliament.

In respect of our Parliamentary usages, the Colonies are preferring a request which, though it may not lead to sub-
A Colonial Grievance.
mersion of tea-chests in Sydney Harbour or other Australasian port, may, in time, seriously engage the attention of Mr. Chamberlain. When members of the Imperial Parliament visit any of the self-governing Colonies it is the pretty fashion for the Premier to move that

chairs be provided for them on the floor of the House at the right of the Speaker. When members of Colonial Parliaments, not to mention Colonial Premiers and Ministers of the Crown, visit the House of Commons, they have no privileges other than those shared in common with more or less distinguished strangers. If there is room they may have a seat in the Diplomatic Gallery; or, on the same conditions, under the gallery, with the proviso that they shall be bundled out whenever a division is called. The congregation of Colonial Premiers who flocked to London in honour of the Jubilee brought this condition of affairs to a head.

Mr. Hogan, M.P., whose birthplace was Nenagh, whose home is the world, with a special preference for Australia, has taken the matter in hand. He does not go the length of proposing that Colonial magnates shall have a seat on the floor of the House, but suggests that they may be admitted to the side-gallery on the right of the Speaker, at present reserved for members. This point of view is not nearly so good as that provided by the front row of the Diplomatic Gallery. But honourable distinctions are of more account than is personal convenience.

The laxer rules of the House of Lords as affecting the outside public is illustrated when foreign potentates or high Ministers of State visit this country. Last year we had the King of Siam, who diligently went the round of both Houses. In the Commons he was treated as an ordinary distinguished stranger, a seat being provided for him in the gallery over the clock. When he went over to the House of Lords a chair was placed for him on the steps of the Throne, literally on the floor of the House. License in
the Lords.

This contiguity with the Woolsack enabled His Majesty to observe with close and audibly-expressed delight the graceful performance of the Lord Chancellor as, popping on and off the Woolsack, he formally placed the House in and out of Committee. No one present can ever forget the boyish delight with which the King, digging his *chaperon*, Lord Harris, in the ribs, pointed to the stately figure, which

he seemed to think had been specially wound up to go through this quaint performance for his Royal pleasure.

When, a year earlier, Li Hung Chang was a visitor to these shores, he suffered the same reverse of fortune. In the Commons he was seated with Westminster boys and other distinguished visitors in the Diplomatic Gallery. In the House of Lords he had a chair set for him almost under the shadow of the Throne.

"POPPING ON AND OFF THE WOOLSACK."

in close proximity to the Bar, has its restrictions for members. The very best place in the Chamber from

Per contra, this particular part of the House of Commons, The Cross Benches.

THE CROSS BENCHES.

which a member might address an audience is the Cross Bench on either side of the Bar. It comes more nearly

than anything else available to the Tribune, from which in Continental Parliaments the orator faces the House. So attractive is the place that a member seated there, and feeling suddenly impelled to take part in debate or to put a supplementary question, sometimes rises and commences an observation. It is promptly interrupted by a roar of execration, amid which the trembling member is projected or dragged forth, and made to stand before one of the side benches.

The explanation of what to the stranger in the Gallery seems an unprovoked and unmanly assault is, that the Cross Benches are technically outside the House, whose area at this quarter is defined by an imaginary bar.

When morning after morning through the Session I hear the Speaker, a few minutes after midnight, put the question "That this House do now adjourn," I think of times that are no more, and wonder how ^{Daybreak on Westminster Bridge.} members of the present House would like to have them resuscitated. Twenty years ago, nay a dozen years ago, the hour at which members now expect to go home, querulous if they are kept up for an extra half-hour, was the epoch of the sitting at which business usually began to brisk up. Members flocking down for questions at half-past four never knew at what time of the next morning they would be free from their labours. For the cry, "Who goes home?" to echo through the lobby at half-past one in the morning was a sign of uncommonly quiet times. Two or three o'clock was more usual, and history records how, at frequent intervals, there was what came to be called an "All-night sitting."

Often leaving the House after a ten or twelve hours' sitting, I have stood on Westminster Bridge and seen what Wordsworth described as he drove over it on an early September morning in 1803 :—

This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare.
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

The fields are built over, but there remained the truth which Wordsworth hymned, and his sister Dorothy described scarcely less charmingly in a prose letter, that earth has not anything to show more fair than the scene from Westminster

DAYBREAK ON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

Bridge at the break of a summer day. Naturally it was the more soothing after the heat and turmoil of a long sitting in the adjoining House of Commons.

When the Twelve o'clock Rule was introduced it was avowedly an experiment, timidly made in face of that stern Conservatism that animates the House of Commons in all that relates to procedure. Members were assured it would be easy to go back to the old order of things if after the experience of a Session return were found advisable. I suppose there is no power on earth that would to-day induce the House of Commons to revoke the Twelve o'clock Rule. From time to time, to suit Ministerial convenience, it is suspended for a particular sitting. It is necessary that motion to that effect should be formally

made at the commencement of the sitting. The motion carried, the House is at liberty to peg away till two or three o'clock in the morning, or, if it pleases, till breakfast time. It turns out in a majority of cases that extension of time is not needed, debate being brought to a conclusion before midnight, just as if the Rule were still in force. When the limit is overstepped it is only by a few halting paces, members fuming with indignation if they are kept up as late as half-past twelve.

The best part of the story is, that at least as much legislative work is now accomplished in the average Session as was scored during the barbaric times that preceded the establishment of the Twelve o'clock Rule. It is true that the House meeting now at three o'clock instead of four has an hour to the good. By comparison with the old order of things, the rising of the House under the new rule is equivalent to dispersal at one o'clock in the morning. But, taking a Session through, the aggregate duration of a sitting is not nearly what it used to be, whilst there is added the wholesome certainty of members knowing exactly the hour of breaking up.

The Twelve o'clock Rule, like household suffrage and other beneficent revolutionary enactments, was carried under Conservative auspices. Had the proposal been made by a Liberal Minister, Mr. W. H. Smith and his colleagues on the Treasury Bench who carried it would have died on the floor of the House in resisting it. It is one of the advantages of having a Tory Government occasionally in power, that its tenure of office frequently sees bold reforms accomplished. To Mr. Arthur Balfour, subservient to the same law of nature, the House is indebted for the scheme whereby Supply is regularly dealt with through a succession of Friday nights. This rule on its proposal was violently assailed by some Liberal critics as an infringement on freedom of debate, most jealously guarded in all that relates to Supply. It has come to pass that, under the new regulation, Supply is more fully, and more calmly, discussed than it was in the good old days.

Incidentally, the close of the Session within reasonable time is automatically fixed. This is another rule aimed at obstruction—individual or organised—which, whilst it shortens the Session, does not practically narrow opportunity for accomplishing useful work. In spite of occasional suggestions to the contrary, the House of Commons is, after all, an assembly of business men. It is ready (sooner or later) to recognise the inevitable. Having a certain strict measurement of cloth dealt out to it, convinced that in no circumstances will it get an inch more, it cuts its coat accordingly. If there be any difference in the output of the work of a Session under the new and the old orders of things, I should

say that, with the shorter sittings and the automatically - closed Session, more work is done than under the looser arrangements that made obstruction master of the situation.

The lamented death of Sir H. Havelock-Allan relieves the public purse from two distinct payments. Sir Henry was in receipt

Pensioners in the House of Commons.

of £700 a year retired pay as Major-General and Honorary Lieut.-General. In addition, he received a pension of £1000 a year for military services. In this respect he topped the list of members of the House of Commons drawing State pay. I think the nearest to him is General Fitzwygram, who draws retired pay to the amount of £1185 a year. General Edwards, Member

THE LATE SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN.

for Hythe, is comforted in his retirement with a pension of £770. General Goldsworthy draws only £466, but he commuted £256 per annum of his retired pay, receiving a

lump sum of £1951 : 16 : 6. The odd shillings and pence recall the items in President Kruger's little bill.

General Laurie draws £610 retired pay. General Russell and General McCalmont each have £500 a year, the half-pay of a Major-General. Colonel Wyndham Murray, of Bath, draws £300 a year retired pay, with an additional £70 a year for arduous and gallant services as Gentleman-at-Arms. Sir John Colomb battens on the retired pay of a captain, amounting to £133 : 16 : 8. But he has, or had, to the good £1595 : 15s., amount paid for commutation of pensions. Mr. Arthur O'Connor preserves pleasant reminiscences of duties at the War Office in the shape of retired pay amounting to £172 : 10s. He commuted his pension for a lump sum of £2420 : 18 : 6. The Marquis of Lorne draws £1100 a year as Governor and Constable of Windsor Castle. Serjeant Hemphill, some time Solicitor-General for

SERJEANT HEMPHILL.

Ireland, has a pension of 1000 guineas a year in commemoration of his Chairmanship of County Kerry. From the same distressful country, Mr. W. J. Corbett draws a pension of £292 : 10s., he having for a while been Chief Clerk of the Lunatic Department. Mr. Doogan, the member for East Tyrone, modestly assimilates £111 : 5 : 4, the pension of a National School Teacher.

Sir Thomas Fardell has his new knighthood supported by a pension of £666 : 13 : 4, the pension of a Registrar in Bankruptcy. 666 is, of course, the Number of the Beast; the 13s. 4d. more directly pertains to the lawyer. Colonel Kenyon Slaney has £420 a year retired pay, and Mr. Staveley Hill receives, in addition to fees, £100

as Counsel to the Admiralty and Judge Advocate of the Fleet.

These are the whales among the pensioners in the House of Commons. There are some small fry ^{The Minnows.} who receive trifling recognition of military ardour devoted to the service of their country. Lord Cranborne, for example, draws £22:19s. annual pay as Colonel of the 4th Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment. He further has an allowance of £17:11:6. Mr. Hermon Hodge sustains his distinctively military appearance on £6:11:3, supplemented by an allowance of £2:1:7 as Captain and Honorary Major of the Oxford Yeomanry. Sir Elliot Lees, ^{ref} Bart., draws a Captain's pay in the Dorset Yeomanry.

MR. HERMON HODGE.

Together with allowance it foots up to £8:11:3 per annum. Mr. Legh, Captain and Hon. Major of the Lancashire Hussars Yeomanry, draws an aggregate of 1s. 10d. a year more. Mr. Walter Long supplements his salary as President of the Board of Agriculture by pay and allowance amounting to £10:3:6, the guerdon of his colonelcy of the Royal Wilts Yeomanry. Mr. George Wyndham, Captain of the Cheshire Yeomanry, is put off with a paltry £8:13:4 in annual pay and allowance. In worst plight of all is Lord Dudley's brother, Mr.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: "HAVE YOU SEEN MR. WARD?"

Ward, who represents the Crewe division of Cheshire. As Second Lieutenant of the Worcester Yeomanry he receives in pay and allowance £4 : 19s. a year.

The House of Commons will begin to understand why the gallant member has gone to the Cape, exciting the concern of Mr. Swift MacNeill at his prolonged abstention from Parliamentary duties. A man can't get on in London on £5 a year minus one shilling.

The present Earl of Derby is one of the few members of

An Unknown the House of Lords
Post. who can bring to

discussion of affairs in Crete personal knowledge of the island. Just twenty years ago, when he was Secretary of State for War, he made a semi-official tour in Eastern waters, accompanied by that gallant seaman Mr. W. H. Smith, at the time First Lord of the Admiralty. The event was celebrated in the following verse, the manuscript of which, in an unrecognised hand, I turned up the other day among some papers relating to the epoch :—

"THE HEAD OF THE ARMY AND
CHIEF OF THE FLEET."

MARS. COL. THE HON. A. F. STANLEY.
NEPTUNE : THE LATE W. H. SMITH.

The head of the Army and chief of the Fleet
Went out on a visit to Cyprus and Crete.
The natives received them with joyful hurrahs,
Called one of them Neptune, the other one Mars.
They ran up an altar to Stanley forthwith,
And ran up a bookstall to W. H. Smith.

To the sensitive ear the rhyme of the last couplet is not everything that might be desired. But the intention is good.

CHAPTER XIV

JUNE

DURING Mr. Gladstone's stay at Bournemouth in the early days of March conversation turned upon the prognostications about the next Unionist Premier. **Lord Salisbury's Successor.** Asked whom he thought would succeed Lord Salisbury, Mr. Gladstone replied in that deep chest note he uses when strongly moved : "The Duke of Devonshire."

In reviewing probable candidates for the post, the authority whose opinion I was privileged to quote did not glance beyond the House of Commons. I fancy that, fascinated by consideration of possible rivalry in the running between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Balfour, he "forgot Devonshire," as Lord Randolph Churchill on an historic occasion "forgot Goschen." Mr. Gladstone, who forgot nothing, seems to have hit the right nail on the head. The succession of the Duke of Devonshire to the post of the Marquis of Salisbury—men of all parties and politics will hope the occasion may be far distant—would, save from one aspect presently noted, be as popular as it would be meet. The Duke's promotion, on whatever plane or to whatever height it may reach, would never evoke the opposition instinctively ranged against the advance of a pushful man. Every one knows that, if the Duke followed his natural impulse and gratified his heart's desire, he would stand aside altogether from the worry and responsibility of public life.

As it is, he compromises by strolling in late to meet its successive engagements.

It was under personal persuasion of Mr. John Bright that he first essayed public life. In deference to party loyalty and a sense of public duty he, on the retirement of Mr. Gladstone in 1874, undertook the thankless task of leading the disorganised and disheartened Liberal Party. Having twelve years later, for conscience' sake, withdrawn from the Leadership of Mr. Gladstone, he again caught a glimpse of the land where it is always afternoon. Mr. Chamberlain at this crisis braced him up to meet the new call of duty.

In a long and not unvaried political career no one has ever hinted "STROLLING IN LATE," at suspicion that the Duke of Devonshire was influenced in any step by self-seeking motive. He may have been right, he may have been wrong. He always did the thing he believed to be right, irrespective of personal prejudice or desire. Neither on the public platform nor in either House of Parliament has he met with the success that marks the effort of some others. But it would be impossible to exaggerate the width and the depth of the esteem with which this shy bored man, who would chiefly like to be

"BRACING HIM UP."

let alone, is held in the hearts of the people. A Ministry

formed under his Premiership would start with an enormous and sustaining access of popular confidence.

Apart from that, the arrangement would recommend itself by shelving off that otherwise inevitable conflict for final pre-eminence between Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain the prophetic soul of my Mentor discovered, and disclosed in his conversation recorded in an earlier chapter. Whatever

A "BALLON D'ESSAI."

may be the views of those statesmen with respect to playing second fiddle one to the other, there would be no possible objection to either serving under the Duke of Devonshire as Premier.

The quarter from which opposition to the Duke of Devonshire's advancement to the Premiership will come is the Tory wing of the Unionist camp. Just before
A Tory Easter, a story with circumstance was circulated,
Protest. indicating the immediate retirement of Lord Salisbury from the Premiership and the succession of the Duke of Devon-

shire. That was certainly not a *ballon d'essai* from Downing Street. It equally well served the purpose. It drew forth unmistakable testimony that proposal of such arrangement would occasion unpleasant protest.

Objection was not taken on the ground of personal disqualification on the part of the Duke. What was bluntly said in private conversation was that, in the division of the spoils of office, the Liberal Unionists had secured something more than their full share. To confer the Leadership upon a member of their body, however distinguished and, on personal grounds, however acceptable, was too great a sacrifice to be claimed for the altar of Unionism. This demonstration will, doubtless, have due influence in directing the final arrangement whenever circumstances call for its settlement.¹

Mr. Goschen has, I believe, made considerable progress with a labour of love, his solace in the comparative leisure of the recess. It is preparation of the life and correspondence of his grandfather, a publisher in *Mr. Goschen's Literary Work*. Berlin a century ago. He lived through the time of the First Empire, his literary connections bringing him in contact with some of the principal men of the age. These letters he preserved, together with copies of his own correspondence.

Nobody wishes the First Lord of the Admiralty that prolonged leisure which would result from dismissal of Her Majesty's Ministers from office. Still, it would be a loss to the country, equal to the non-completion of a new ironclad, if he failed to find time to finish his book. I never read the First Lord's *Theory of the Foreign Exchange*, and am not in a position to judge of his literary style. But he is a man of keen literary taste, who certainly has to his hand the materials for a memorable book.

One of the fables about Mr. Balfour that endear him to the public mind is that which pictures him as never reading

¹ When in 1902 Lord Salisbury retired, the legacy of his Ministerial vesture was parted in twain. The Duke of Devonshire succeeded him in the Leadership of the Lords, Mr. Balfour in the Premiership.

a newspaper. It is only partially true, and like most true things, it is not new. The peculiarity finds A Precedent for Mr. Balfour. parallel in so distinct a personage as Edmund Burke. In the interesting and curious autobiography of Arthur Young, edited by M. Betham-Edwards, there is note of an interview with Burke. Under date May 1, 1796, Arthur Young describes how he visited the great statesman, who "after breakfast took me a sauntering walk of five hours over his farm and to a cottage where a scrap of land had been stolen from the waste." Speaking on public affairs, Young records, "Burke said he never looked at a newspaper. 'But if anything happens to occur which they think will please me, I am told of it.'" Young observed that there was strength of mind in this resolution. "Oh no," Burke replied, "it is mere weakness of mind."

With Mr. Arthur Balfour the motive is probably philosophical indifference.

Another proof supplied by this book of the truth of the axiom about nothing being new under the sun is personal to

Mr. Jesse Collings. Three Acres and a Cow. That eminent statesman first came into prominent notice as a politician by his adoption of the battle-cry, "Three Acres and a Cow." A forebear of the present Lord Winchilsea, whose interest in agriculture is hereditary, was first in this particular field.

Writing in June 1817, Mr Young notes: "Lord Winchilsea called here and chatted with me upon cottagers' land for cows, which he is well persuaded, and most justly, is the only remedy for the evil of poor rates."

"AH, YES, I USED TO SING IT, BUT THAT WAS YEARS AGO."

That is not exactly the way Mr. Jesse Collings put it. It comes to the same thing in the end.

The innate Conservatism of the House of Commons is picturesquely shown in the retention of the thin line of red that marks the matting on either side of the floor, "The Thin a short pace in front of the rows of benches on Red Line." either side. Up to the present day it is a breach of order for any members addressing the Speaker or Chairman of Committees to stand outside this mark. If by chance one strays he is startled by angry shout of "Order! Order!"

Probably few members who thus vindicate order know the origin of this particular institution. The red line is a

"THE RED LINE."

relic of duelling days. It then being the custom for every English gentleman to wear a sword, he took the weapon down with him to the House, with as easy assurance as to-day he may carry his toothpick. In the heat of debate it was the most natural thing in the world to draw a sword and drive home an argument by pinking in the ribs the controversialist on the other side. The House, in its wisdom, therefore ordered that no member taking part in debate should cross a line to be drawn on the floor. This was judiciously spaced so that members standing within the line were far beyond reach of each other's sword-point.

In spite of this grandmotherly precaution, duels arising out of quarrels picked in the House, and forthwith settled in

Swords. its immediate precincts, became so frequent that

a fresh order was promulgated forbidding members to carry arms during attendance on their Parliamentary duties. The only armed man in attendance on debate is the Serjeant-at-Arms, who carries a pretty sword. Once a year exception is further made in the case of the mover and seconder of the Address, who may wear the sword pertaining to their naval or military uniform.

The way it persistently gets between their legs as they walk up the floor, or try to sit down, consoles less distinguished members for general abrogation of the privilege.

One other nice distinction in the matter of steel implements exists to the disadvantage (or advantage according as the case is regarded) of the borough member.

Spurs.

A Knight of the Shire may, if he thinks fit, enter the House of Commons and take part in debate with spurs on. This luxury is forbidden to the borough member. Sir Herbert Maxwell tells me he once saw a borough member who had ridden down to the House innocently attempt to enter the Chamber with armed heel. He was immediately stopped—whether by the doorkeeper or the lynx-eyed Serjeant-at-Arms, watchful in his chair, deponent sayeth not—and compelled to remove his spurs.

A new-fangled notion the House of Commons cannot away with is that of type-writing. It is true that in recent

Type-written years accommodation has been made for private
Petitions.

members to use type-writing machines. That is a private affair, strictly guarded to the extent that members availing themselves of the machines must pay the type-writer.

It is quite another thing when, as sometimes happens, people, ignorant of some of the more delicate of the foundations on which the safety and prosperity of the Empire rest, forward type-written petitions to the House. More than a century ago it was ordered that all petitions presented to the honourable House should be written in legible, clerkly hand.

Neither lithograph nor printed type was permitted. Editors of newspapers and magazines, publishers, press readers, and the like, welcome the sight of type-written manuscript in matter submitted to their judgment. The House of Commons is above petty considerations of the kind that influence this opinion. When it was established, there was no such device as lithography, type-writing, or, for the matter of that, a printing-press. Petitions were then written by hand, and they must be so written now.

The Committee on Petitions, accordingly, make a point of returning every petition other than those written by hand, and in this decision it has the support of the Speaker, to whom the question has been solemnly submitted.

Our Cap'en Tommy Bowles is not the first of his clan in the House of Commons. There was one there more than A Mid-Century fifty years ago, though Bowles, M.P. (happy augury) he ranked as admiral. In *The Mirror of Parliament* of the Session 1845 I find the following entry: "Admiral Bowles alluded to the Duke of Portland having built the *Pantaloön* to improve naval architecture. But the Navy could not boast of a pair of pantaloons. (A laugh.) He (Admiral Bowles) had himself commanded the armament in the Shannon, which had distinguished itself in the collection of the Irish poor rates."

This last remark further shows how apt is history to repeat itself.

There is no recent case of the British Navy in Irish waters being commissioned for the collection of rents or rates; but during Coercion days, between 1886 and 1890, detachments of the British Army were not infrequently invoked for assistance in the collection of rents.

CAP'EN TOMMY BOWLES, OF
THE HORSE MARINES.

At the time of the Queen's Jubilee there was published a list of people who, living at that happy time, had been

Coronations. present at the coronation of the Queen. One

omission from the printed list was the name of the Marquis of Salisbury, at the time a small boy of seven summers, absolutely indifferent to the bearings of the Concert of Europe. In the matter of experience at coronations, Sir

John Mowbray stands alone. He saw the Queen's Coronation Procession as it passed along the street. He was actually present at the Coronation of William IV. The Westminster boys had the privilege of being seated in Westminster Abbey just above the benches allotted to the Peers. Sir John, then at Westminster School, availed himself of the opportunity, and to this day declares that he and his school chums had a much better view of the scene than had the Peers.

Sir John, older by fifteen years than the Prime Minister, was at Oxford when the Queen came to the throne. On the occasion of Her Majesty's marriage, the University drew up a loyal address and sent a deputation of their members to present it. Young Mowbray (young at this day) was one of those entrusted with this pleasant and honourable duty. His keenest and still abiding recollection of the scene is the Duke of Wellington standing in close attendance on the girl Queen.

In the rough-and-tumble of electioneering contest, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett is more successful than he proves in the

The Bald Truth. finer fence of the House of Commons. But he sometimes meets his match in Yorkshire. At

one of the gatherings in an electoral campaign, he was frequently interrupted by a man in the body of the hall, who resented his uncompromising attacks upon political opponents.

The Knight bore this trial with admirable good-humour, till, seeing an opening for scoring a point, he said—

“Now I am going to tell you something about the late Liberal Government that will make my friend’s hair stand on end,” indicating, with smiling nod, the vigorous critic in the body of the hall.

“Wrong again!” shouted the irrepressible one, removing his cap and displaying a head smooth as a billiard-ball. “It can’t be done.”

“WRONG AGAIN!”

The other day a member of Her Majesty’s Government, one of the oldest living statesmen, whose acquaintance with public meetings is equal to that of any of his contemporaries left in the House of Commons, was talking to me about the varying quality of public audiences. As any one accustomed to speak from the platform knows, audiences differ widely and inscrutably.

Public
Audiences.

“Broadly speaking,” said the right hon. gentleman, “the farther north the political orator travels the better—I mean the more inspiring—will he find his audience. Going into particulars, I should say that London, for this purpose, is the worst of all. The best audiences are Scotch, and I have found in my personal experience the pick of them at Glasgow. Newcastle-on-Tyne is excellent; Liverpool is second-rate; Birmingham, so-so.”

It would be interesting to have these experiences com-

pared. Doubtless a speaker's judgment would be biassed by the practical result of his visit to particular towns. If, for example, he were elected at the head of the poll in Glasgow, and left at the bottom in London, he could hardly be expected to retain through life fond recollections of the community that had dissembled its love. The Minister to whom I allude¹ never contested Glasgow, and for many years was returned at the head of the poll for a great London constituency. His testimony may therefore be regarded as unbiassed by personal predilection.

The Terrace of Westminster Palace flanking the river is so intimately connected with the House of Commons, that it ex-

clusively
bears its
name. The House of
Commons'
Terrace.

"The House of Commons' Terrace," it is called, as it looms large through the London season. But members of the House of Lords have an equal share in its privileges. They might, if they pleased, on fine summer afternoons bring down bevvies of fair dames

"IN SOLITARY STATE."

and regale them with tea, strawberries, and cream.

By way of asserting their rights, the Peers some time ago caused to be set forth on the Terrace a few belated benches specially assigned to and reserved for their use. They are deposited at the farther, bleaker end of the Terrace, whence the afternoon sun earliest flees. On very rare occasions a peer may be seen haughtily seated in solitary state on one of these benches. Somehow the thing does not

¹ Mr. Goschen.

work, and noble Lords strolling on the Terrace are humbly grateful if invited to sit at the table of a friend among the Commoners.

I suppose that, next to the Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Speaker of the House of Commons is the recipient of the oddest correspondence in the The Speaker's Letter-box. world. The late Lord Hampden, presiding over the House of Commons at a time of extreme excitement consequent on the opening of the campaign of Irish obstruction, was especially enriched. Amongst his oddest experiences was the receipt by railway parcel of a box whose way-bill showed that it came from Ireland. Mr. Brand found it awaiting him on returning to Speaker's House after an uninterrupted sitting in the Commons of some forty-eight hours. He was piqued at the appearance of the box, and before seeking much-needed rest had it opened—discreetly, as became such undertakings in those troublesome times.

The uplifted lid disclosed a pair of torn and toil-worn trousers, the odour filling the room with pained sense of the absence of primroses. On the garment was pinned a piece of paper on which was written the text, "God's will be done!"

Its application to the trousers and their despatch, carriage paid, to the Speaker of the House of Commons was and remains obscure. The incident was long anterior to the date at which Mr. William O'Brien's garments figured largely in the political history of the day. It serves to show how intimately, if in this case obscurely, Irish politics are, so to speak, wrapped up in trousers.

The member for a northern constituency tells me of a melancholy accident that recently befell him. He happens to represent a borough in which party spirit runs Misdirected Zeal. high, and finds outlet in physical demonstrations.

On the occasion of his annual visit news reached his committee that the other side were planning, if not to pack the hall, at least to insert some formidable wedges of hostility.

It was agreed that these tactics must be met on their own lines. The member accordingly recruited in London a score of stout fellows who had served lusty apprenticeship as chuckers-out at music-halls, public-houses, and other popular resorts. They were discreetly conveyed in groups of two or three to the borough, lodged out with instructions to gather in the body of the hall within touch of each other, and unite their forces in the event of a hostile demonstration.

The member got through his speech pretty well, attempts at criticism or interruption being drowned in the applause of his supporters. When he resumed his seat a meek-looking gentleman rose in the middle of the hall and said, "Mr. Chairman!" He was greeted with cheers and counter-cheers, through the roar of which he feebly tried to continue his remarks. The lambs, disappointed at the tameness of the business, began to warm up in prospect of work. As the mild-looking gentleman persisted in endeavour to speak, they, at a given signal from their captain, swooped down upon him, lifted him shoulder high, and made a rush for the door with intent to fling him out. The townsmen in the body of the hall rallied to the rescue. A fight of fearsome ferocity followed. In the end the police were called in, and the hall cleared.

"This will be a nasty business for us at the next election," gloomily said the chairman of the meeting to the member, as they made their way out from the back of the platform. "That was Mr. K——, one of your most influential supporters. He had risen to propose a vote of thanks to you when he was set upon in that infamous manner. It's not only him that was attacked. I saw scores of our best men going out with bleeding noses and blackened eyes. It'll tell some hundreds of votes against you at the next election."

It is a peculiarity of Parliamentary debate that whenever a certain journal is alluded to it is always styled "*The Times* newspaper." Any other paper mentioned is alluded to simply by its name. In private conversation or in

correspondence, the very same members who mouth a reference to "*The Times* newspaper" would, as a Parliamentary matter of course, speak of "*The Times*." It is ^{Parliamentary} ~~Fatuities.~~ one of those little things which show how much there is among mankind, even in the House of Commons, of the character of a sheep. In a field you shall see one of a flock jumping over an imaginary obstacle, the rest following, doing exactly the same, though there is plainly nothing in the way. In the dim past some pompous person, stretching out his verbiage, talked of "*The Times* newspaper." Others followed suit. To-day the custom is as firmly rooted as are the foundations of Victoria Tower.

A kindred fatuity of Parliamentary speech is to talk of an hon. member "rising in his place," as if it were usual for him to rise in somebody else's, and, therefore, necessary for a variation

"LAYING."

in the habit to be noted. Funnier is the fashion amongst Ministers, especially Under-Secretaries, to talk about "laying a paper." What they mean is laying a paper on the table of the House. Tradition has grown up in the Foreign Office and elsewhere that a Parliamentary paper, whether Report, Despatch, or Blue Book, should be regarded as if it were an egg. The Minister accordingly always talks *tout court*, either of "laying it" or "having laid it" or of undertaking to "lay it in a very few days," the latter an assurance of prevision far beyond the scope of the average hen-coop.

A member of the Press Gallery of the House of Commons,

who long ago took his last "turn" and handed in his final **Shakespeare** copy, lives tenderly in my memory by reason of **up to Date.** a passage in his report of a speech delivered in the country by a great statesman.

It ran as follows: "The right hon. gentleman concluded by expressing the opinion that the quality of mercy is not unduly strained. It dropped, he said, as the gentle rain from heaven descends upon the place beneath. In fact, he did not hesitate to assert that it was twice blessed, conferring blessing alike upon the donor and the recipient. (Loud cheers, amid which the right hon. gentleman resumed his seat.)"

It was another of the confraternity, a painstaking, conscientious colleague of my own, who, reporting a speech, happed upon the flawless couplet—

Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

Whether he did not catch the last word, or, having it on his notes, thought it would be kind to save the speaker from the consequences of a slip of the tongue—for how could a flower blossom in the dust?—he wrote the lines thus—

Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom like a rose.

CHAPTER XV

JULY

WHEN the history of the influence of the Home Rule movement on the fortunes of the Liberal Party is written the

The Rest in
the Liberal
Temple:
behind
the Veil.

world will learn how, at a particular juncture, the riven party came near closing up its ranks. Meanwhile I am able to supply from private sources an authentic narrative of a political event which in national importance, in influence on the career of individuals, and in dramatic effect, finds its nearest parallel in Sir Robert Peel's conversion to Free Trade and what followed thereupon.

THE WHIGS TAKE FRIGHT.

In the middle of December 1885, what was subsequently recognised as a *ballon d'essai* was sent up by a Leeds

newspaper announcing that Mr. Gladstone had determined to celebrate the Liberal triumph at the General Election by bringing in a measure conferring Home Rule upon Ireland. Attention being called to the report, it was circumspectly denied. But the Whig section of the Liberal Party, of whom Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen were representatives, took fright.

Lord Hartington found an opportunity of publicly announcing that "no proposals on the policy to be adopted by the Liberal Party in reference to the demand of a large number of Irish representatives for the legislative independence of Ireland" had been communicated to him. As the weeks slipped by doubt deepened into certainty. The Whig wing of the Liberal Party drew farther apart from Mr. Gladstone. The situation was accentuated when, on the 26th of January 1886, Lord Salisbury, who, in spite of heavy defeat at the poll, met the new Parliament as Premier,

was with his Government overthrown.

It was Mr. Jesse Collings who led the attack on the Ministers, his battle-flag proudly emblazoned with the famous design of three acres and a cow. Behind him stood Mr. Chamberlain. Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen spoke against the amendment, and were accompanied into the Minis-

MR. JESSE COLLINGS LEADS THE ATTACK.

terial division lobby by Sir Henry James. When, a week later, Mr. Gladstone formed his Administration, Lord Hart-

ington and Sir Henry James declined to join it, the latter sacrificing for conscience' sake the prize of the Woolsack. Mr. Chamberlain and Sir George Trevelyan, accepting what they understood as assurances that the now inevitable Home Rule Bill would not imperil the unity of the Empire, joined Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet, one as President of the Local Government Board, the other as Secretary for Scotland.

On the 27th of March these two Ministers resigned. In Cabinet Council they had learned the full truth about the Home Rule Bill. When it was first drafted it contained a clause establishing the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, and retaining at Westminster the collaboration of the Irish members. In a slightly modified form this clause appeared in the second draft of the Bill. In the third and final form Mr. Gladstone, yielding to the imperative conditions of Mr. Parnell, master of eighty-six votes, eliminated the clause. Whereupon Mr. Chamberlain and Sir George Trevelyan withdrew from the Cabinet.

This brief *résumé* of events is necessary for the full understanding of the narrative that follows. The public have during the past ten years grown so accustomed to finding Mr. Chamberlain and the peer who was Lord Hartington working together in the unity of Liberal Unionism, that they are apt to suppose the same conditions existed from the first. As a matter of fact, in February 1886, Mr. Chamberlain was as widely severed from Lord Hartington as a month later he came to be parted from Mr. Gladstone. The Radical Anti-Home Rulers, following his lead, were bitterly resentful of the Whig Anti-Home Rulers, captained by Lord Hartington, a feeling accentuated by the vote given by them on Mr. Jesse Collings's amendment to the Address, which made an end of Lord Salisbury's foredoomed Administration.

This was Mr. Gladstone's opportunity, used in the fitful negotiations that almost recaptured the Radicals. Lord Hartington and his friends in council did not want Home Rule on any terms. Mr. Chamberlain and his more than

half-hundred Radical followers were quite willing to give Ireland Home Rule if the control of the Imperial Parliament were jealously conserved.

This state of things existed up to Monday, the 10th of May 1886, on which day Mr. Gladstone rose to move the second reading of his Bill. The position of the Government was critical. There were ninety-three Liberals who had declared against the Bill. If they

A Flag
of Truce.



carried their objection as far as the division lobby it would be thrown out, and Mr. Gladstone and his Government must go with it. Many discerned the dire peril of the Liberal Party. One perceived a way of averting it. This was Mr. Labouchere, who, whilst an uncompromising Home Ruler, at the time enjoyed the confidence of Mr. Chamberlain. He appointed to himself the task of reuniting the Radical section of the Liberal Unionists with what later came to be known as the Gladstonians. The fissure had opened on the question

MR. LABOUCHERE AS THE MESSENGER
OF THE GODS.

of the retention of Irish members at Westminster. If Mr. Gladstone gave way on that point all might be well.

In conference with his colleagues the Premier finally agreed to the adoption of provisions whereby the Irish members should sit and vote on questions of Imperial range, including matters of finance. On Saturday, the 8th of May, Mr. Labouchere, having obtained this assurance in Downing Street, sought an interview with Mr. Chamberlain, who after some hesitation consented to accept this understanding as a

basis of reconciliation. The agreement was put in writing, Mr. Chamberlain dictating the terms, Mr. Labouchere acting as scribe—an arrangement which recalls the circumstances under which what is known in history as the Benedetti Treaty was committed to paper. Mr. Labouchere, having carried this flag of truce to Downing Street, went off to the country for a Sunday's rest, which he felt he had well earned.

Coming back to town on the memorable Monday, the morn of the day on which the second reading of the Home Rule Bill was to be moved in terms and upon conditions that would bring back to the fold the A Hinch. strayed sheep, Mr. Labouchere discovered that his patriotic labour was undone. A note from Mr. Chamberlain awaited him, bitterly complaining that Mr. Gladstone was backing out, an assurance based on what purported to be an authorised paragraph in one of the London papers, in which Mr. Gladstone was represented as protesting that he had yielded on no point connected with his Bill. Mr. Labouchere made haste to communicate with the Liberal Whip, and learned what had happened whilst he was spending a peaceful Sabbath day on the banks of the Thames. It had been brought to Mr. Gladstone's knowledge that Mr. Chamberlain, after his interview with Mr. Labouchere on the Saturday, sent round to his friends a telegram announcing "absolute surrender" on the part of the Premier. Captain O'Shea received one of these messages. He showed it to Parnell, who sent it on to Mr. Gladstone.

CAPTAIN O'SHEA.

From a Sketch made at the Parnell Commission.

At this epoch the great statesman had been convinced of the impossibility of carrying, against the defection of a powerful section of his followers, the Home Rule Bill in its original form. He was ready to compromise. But those

familiar with his constitutional tendencies will understand how desperately he struggled against any appearance of being overcome in fight, more especially by a former lieutenant, and that lieutenant Mr. Chamberlain. When the emissary of a newspaper brought him news of the currency of the Chamberlain telegram, and asked if it were true, the temptation to Mr. Gladstone to convince himself that he had yielded nothing would be irresistible. Hence the counter paragraph.

When this bolt from the blue swiftly descended, threatening to destroy the edifice of peace carefully built up, the amateur **More** architect turned to Mr. Gladstone. He found **Negotiations.** the Premier was staying with a friend at Sheen. Thither was despatched a messenger on a swift horse with an account of the new dilemma and request for instructions. Mr. Gladstone replied, it was quite true he had agreed to two alterations in his Bill—allowing Irish members to vote (1) on Imperial matters; (2) on finance of an Imperial character. The first amendment he undertook to draw up himself. The second he said he did not fully comprehend. If Mr. Chamberlain would formulate his demand in the shape of a clause, he did not doubt that he would be able to accept it. Mr. Labouchere brought this proposal to Mr. Chamberlain, who plainly denounced it as an effort to shirk the question, reading into Mr. Gladstone's letter a determination not to adopt the second amendment.

Mr. Labouchere, industrious, indomitable, did not despair. All was not lost as long as the Bill awaited the second **Disappoint-** reading. If Mr. Gladstone would only announce **ment.** intention of dropping the Bill after its broad principle had been approved by a vote on the second reading, it might be brought up again next Session, with reconstruction of the 24th and 39th Clauses meeting the objection of Mr. Chamberlain and his friends. On such understanding the fifty-five Radicals who followed Mr. Chamberlain would vote for the second reading, crisis would be averted, the Ministry would be saved, the Session might be appropriated for other business, and the work approached on safer grounds in 1887.

On the eve of the motion for the second reading, Mr. Labouchere believed he had Mr. Gladstone's definite and distinct assurance that he would take this course. It is difficult to believe that so shrewd a man, one so well versed in affairs, can have been deceived on this important point. What happened in the interval between Mr. Labouchere's last message from the Premier and the delivery of the speech in the House of Commons? Perhaps if Mr. Parnell were alive and in communicative mood, he might tell. However it be, when the Premier rose to move the second reading of the Home Rule Bill the Radicals below the Gangway sat straining their ears for the promised words of concession and conciliation. They were not spoken, and when Mr. Gladstone resumed his seat it was felt that all was over. It is easy to be wise after the event, and every one, not excepting Mr. Gladstone, had early occasion to perceive how fatal and irrevocable was the error committed on this memorable day. Had the Premier followed the lines laid down for him, understood to have been accepted by him, the history of England during the last twelve years would have greatly varied in the writing.

The member deputed by Mr. Chamberlain to follow Mr. Gladstone, and accept the flag of truce he was expected to hold out, was Sir Lewis McIver, then Radical member for Torquay, a member who, in a quiet, effective way, had much to do with the Radical revolt against the Bill. Mr. Labouchere, through the Whip, sent Mr. Gladstone a message on the Treasury Bench to inform him that the ambiguity of his phrase had wrought final and fatal mischief. Mr. Gladstone privily replied that he had meant it to be clearly understood that the Irish members were to sit at SIR LEWIS MCIVER. Westminster. Somehow or other the accustomed master of plain English had failed to make himself understood. Prepared to yield, he wanted things to look as

little as possible like surrender, and so the opportunity of building the golden bridge sped. Mr. Gladstone suggested that Lord Herschell should have an interview with Mr. Chamberlain, when all would be explained. Mr. Chamberlain hotly replied that he would have no more negotiation, but would vote against the Bill.

At a meeting of the Liberal Party, held at the Foreign Office on the 27th of May, the second reading debate being still in progress, Mr. Gladstone said what he ^{The Foreign Office Meeting.} surprisingly omitted to say on moving the second reading. He asserted in the most emphatic manner the supremacy of the Imperial Legislature, and promised to frame a plan that would entitle Irish members to sit and vote at Westminster when Imperial questions arose, or when any proposal for taxation affecting the condition of Ireland was submitted. He even offered to withdraw the Bill before going to a second reading.

These were the points of his concession. Wrapped up in a speech an hour long, they still had about them a disquieting air of mistiness. Desiring to put the matter in a nutshell, Mr. Whitbread, at the conclusion of the speech, rose and said, "Then we understand that the Irish will sit at Westminster?"

MR. WHITBREAD.

"Mr. Gladstone positively glared upon his interrogator" (I quote from the private notes of a member who was present). "'I do not,' he said, 'understand the technicalities of drafting, so I will read again what I am prepared to do.' Then he re-read the passage laboriously turned so that it might appear that, whilst conceding the demands of Chamberlain and his party, he was really doing nothing more than what he had contemplated from the first, the alterations in the Bill being quite immaterial. In short, having been right in proposing

that Irish members should not sit at Westminster, he was equally right in now promising that they should."

Four days later a meeting of the Radical Party was held in one of the Committee-rooms of the House of Commons in order to decide what course they should adopt in the approaching division. Rarely has so Too Late! momentous a meeting been held under the roof of the Palace at Westminster. These fifty-five men held the fate of the Government in their hands. If they voted with Mr. Gladstone, the second reading of the Home Rule Bill would be triumphantly carried. If they abstained, it would creep through and the Ministry would be saved. If they voted against it, the Bill must go and the Ministry with it.

All this was clear enough. None in the room, nor any waiting at the doors to hear the decision, had the slightest forecast of the momentous events hanging on their decision: changes amounting to a revolution of English political parties, accompanied by far-reaching consequences at home and abroad.

Mr. Chamberlain submitted the issue in a speech which one present tells me was a model of judicial impartiality. There were open to them, he said, the familiar three courses. They might vote for the Bill; they might vote against it; they might abstain from the division lobby. He advocated no one of the three, confining himself to the task of summarising the consequences that would severally follow. He suggested that in coming to a decision the process of the second ballot should be adopted.

On the first division of the fifty-five members present



JOSEPH ADDRESSING HIS BRETHREN.
A HISTORICAL FRAGMENT.

three voted in favour of the Bill, thirty-nine against it, thirteen electing to abstain. On a second vote, the three who had voted in favour of the Bill stood by their guns. Of the abstainers nine went over to the stalwarts, and the die was cast.

Shortly after the stroke of one o'clock on the morning of 8th June 1886 the House divided, and a second reading was refused the Home Rule Bill by 343 votes against 313. Of the majority there were 250 Conservatives and 93 Dissident Liberals. Of these last fifty-five were followers of Mr. Chamberlain, thirty-eight men whom on other platforms and in times not long past they angrily denounced as Whigs. They were now united under a common flag, and have to this day, with few notable defections, remained in unity.

It is important to note that the two sections came together for the first time in avowed alliance at a meeting held at Devonshire House on the 14th of May 1886, some time after the secret negotiations with Mr. Gladstone, conducted exclusively with Mr. Chamberlain's section. I have the best reason to know that these began and ended without the personal knowledge of Lord Hartington and his inner council.

On referring to *Annals of Our Time*, I find under date 31st May 1886 that the figures in the divisions taken at the fateful meeting of Radical Dissidents, presided over by Mr. Chamberlain on the eve of the second reading, slightly vary from my account. It was rumoured in the Lobby of the House of Commons that fifty-four members met; that three declared for the second reading; twelve would abstain; and that thirty-eight were in favour of voting against it. This, it will be observed, accounts for only fifty-three. The figures I give are supplied by a member who took a leading part in the revolt.

"A great impression," it is written in the *Annals*, "was made by a letter from Mr. Bright, who stated that though he would not speak he would vote against the Bill." I have had communicated to me some curious particulars about that

unpublished letter, the importance of which upon the history of the country can scarcely be exaggerated. In those troubled times, on the eve of the dissolution of life-long friendships, one surpassing all, Mr. Bright, could not bring himself to resume his attendance at the House of Commons. He spent his evenings at the Reform Club, an arrangement being made that Mr. W. S. Caine, who acted as Whip of the inchoate party, should see him every evening about nine o'clock, and report progress. The final meeting of the Chamberlainites having been decided upon—by a striking coincidence it was

MR. CAINE KEEPING MR. BRIGHT ADVISED.

held in Committee-room No. 15, at a later stage famous in connection with another episode of the Irish question—Mr. Caine saw Mr. Bright, and begged him to attend it. Mr. Bright declined, but agreed to write a letter that might be read at the gathering. After it had been read it was destroyed, no copy being kept. There was a report current at the time that an enterprising journal offered Mr. Caine £100 for the text of the letter.

THE FRIENDLY BROKER.

Mr. Bright was not permitted to receive exclusive in-formation from Mr. Caine

The Friendly Broker.

of what was going forward at this crisis. Mr. Labouchere,

the friendly broker throughout the whole business, posted off to the Reform Club as soon as he heard the decision arrived at by the Radical meeting on the 31st of May.

"What have they done?" eagerly asked Mr. Bright, as he entered.

"They have resolved to vote against the Bill," said Mr. Labouchere.

According to Mr. Labouchere's account of this interview, given at the time to a friend who permits me to use his notes, Mr. Bright expressed regret at this conclusion. The purport of Mr. Bright's letter was that, whilst he distrusted the compromise Mr. Gladstone was at this date prepared to make—to withdraw the Bill after the second reading, re-introducing it the following Session amended in the direction of the views of Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain—he would fall in with whatever conclusion the meeting arrived at. That is the summary of the letter given by one who heard it read at the meeting. Mr. Labouchere, on the contrary, was under the impression that Mr. Bright announced his intention to vote against the Bill. Mr. Labouchere reminding him that he had earlier stated he would abstain from voting, Mr. Bright answered that he had been grossly insulted in public by Mr. Sexton, an incident in his long connection with Ireland which had decided him finally to break with the Nationalist party.

Mr. Labouchere, who suspected that only a portion of the letter had been read to the meeting, asked Mr. Bright to give him a copy for publication. Mr. Bright consented to the publication, but said he had kept no copy. Mr. Caine arriving at this moment, Mr. Bright said, "Give Labouchere my letter to go to the papers." Mr. Caine had already destroyed it.

This narrative of the inner history of the historical epoch, compiled from letters and oral communications made ^{Who killed} to me from leading members in the various ^{Cock Robin?} camps, will enable the judicious reader to form his own opinion as to who killed the Home Rule Bill.

"Who defeated the Bill?" one of the fifty-five meeting

in Committee-room No. 15, still a trusted member of the Unionist party, writes. He answers himself with ascending notes of admiration, preserved from his text: "Hussey Vivian! W. S. Caine!! Winterbotham!!! George Trevelyan!!!! These, following in succession with bitter non-surrender speeches, turned the feeling which Chamberlain's speech had left in a condition of icy impartiality."

"The man who was bitterest against any compromise," writes another leading member of the fifty-five, who has since found salvation, "and was most determined that the Bill should be thrown out, was not Bright, but George Trevelyan, who made a vehement speech, which undoubtedly settled the line the meeting took."

A third correspondent, going back earlier to the date of the first negotiation conducted by Mr. Labouchere between Downing Street and Prince's Gardens, writes: "It having leaked out that negotiations were going forward on the STORMING DOWN TO DOWNING STREET. basis of retaining Irish members at Westminster, and in other directions securing the supremacy of the British Parliament, Parnell went storming down to Downing Street, about two o'clock on the Saturday afternoon before the second reading speech, and knocked the whole arrangement into pie."

CHAPTER XVI

AUGUST

WHEN the world grew accustomed to the near prospect of Mr. Gladstone's retirement from the Premiership there was

Mr. Gladstone's Resignation. curious inquiry as to how long previous to its disclosure the determination had been reached.

Did Mr. Gladstone mean to resign the Premiership when he set out for Biarritz? If so, were his colleagues in the Cabinet aware of the fact?

I recently had opportunity of making inquiry on the point, and found the momentous decision was arrived at shortly after the defeat of the Home Rule Bill, and was made known to his colleagues in the Cabinet some time before he set out on the journey to Biarritz. There are some among them who retain the conviction that for Mr. Gladstone's dignity and the appropriate rounding off of his illustrious career it would have been more appropriate that he should have quitted the stage when the curtain fell on his last great drama. To go pottering along with the Parish Councils Bill in their opinion partook something of the nature of an anti-climax. It was whilst struggling under the burden of this Bill that he dropped the first hint of necessity for retirement. It was characteristic of him that, having one time gone so far as directly and unmistakably to announce his decision, he shrank from its fulfilment.

There is a delightful and true story of a Cabinet dinner

that may some day be told in fuller detail than is permissible here. A Cabinet dinner is distinct in several ways from a Cabinet Council. At the latter the Sovereign presumably presides, and all proceedings are conducted with strict routine, surrounded by an impenetrable wall of secrecy. Though in these days the Sovereign no longer attends Cabinet Councils, her communication with it is closely maintained, the Prime Minister sending to her at the close of each sitting a full account of what has taken place. The Cabinet dinner, at which much important work is often done, is established on more informal, not to say more convivial, lines.

A Surprise
Dinner.

A short time after the Home Rule Bill was thrown out, Mr. Gladstone issued invitations for a Cabinet dinner. It was understood that the occasion was specially devised in order that he might make a final announcement of his pending resignation. The guests assembled in the subdued mood proper to the melancholy event. Conversation on ordinary topics flagged whilst the dinner dragged on. At length a noble lord, specially in Mr. Gladstone's favour and confidence, ventured to ask the host whether it was not time the servants left the room.

"Why?" said Mr. Gladstone, turning quickly upon him with the glowing glance sometimes flashed upon an interlocutor. "Have you anything private to say?"

The embarrassed Councillors thus learned that since the dinner invitations were issued, possibly since he had entered the room, Mr. Glad-

A GLOWING GLANCE.

stone had changed his mind about taking the irrevocable step, and indefinitely deferred its announcement.

It did not come for at least a fortnight later. But it

pre-dated his departure for Biarritz. When he set out on that journey, his colleagues in the Cabinet knew ^{Who told?} that his Ministerial career would close with the dying Session. They loyally kept the secret, which was not disclosed from London. Who betrayed it to the advantage of an evening newspaper is one of the minor mysteries of the piece. When I think of it, I recall Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler's words of wisdom—

A woman's tongue is ever slow
To tell the thing she does not know.

The late Lord Playfair's¹ occupation of the Chair in Committees was contemporaneous with the wildest Parliamentary orgies of modern times. Those were the days of the Bradlaugh scenes, of the growth ^{Lord Playfair.}

and full vigour of the Fourth Party, of Mr. Parnell in his prime, with Mr. Biggar in the proud flush of his imitation sealskin waistcoat. On the whole, Dr. Lyon Playfair, as he then was, did tolerably well. But he was sorely tried. There was something righteously impressive in his manner when, rising to full height and adjusting his spectacles, he invested with Scotch accent the familiar cry of "Order! Order!"

It once fell to Dr. Playfair's lot to "name" twenty-five Irish members right off. He also took part in the more historic all-night

THE LATE LORD PLAYFAIR.

¹ Died 1898.

sittings which led to the suspension of thirty-seven members, including Mr. Parnell. That was the occasion when the House, meeting on a Monday to debate the question of leave to introduce a Protection Bill, uninterruptedly sat till Wednesday. At midnight on Tuesday the worn-out Speaker left the Chair, and Dr. Playfair, acting as Deputy Speaker, took it, remaining at his post all night. The hapless Chairman had to struggle not only with the Irish members, but with the Leaders of the Opposition, who had no patience with his long-suffering. Thirsting for the blood of Mr. Parnell, they insisted that he should be "named." Dr. Playfair declining to accede to the request, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir M. Hicks-Beach, and his colleagues on the front bench rose and, shaking the dust of the House from off their feet, quitted its precincts. There was a suspicion at the time that this was a cunningly devised scheme whose principal object was to secure a night's rest without the appearance of neglecting duty. But it was a little hard on a sufficiently battered Chairman.

At nine o'clock on the Wednesday morning the Speaker returned, peremptorily stopped Mr. Biggar, who was on his legs, and for the first time in Parliamentary history put the closure in force.

In considering Dr. Playfair's career as Chairman of Ways and Means, there should be taken into account the fact that not only did he live in stormy times, but the Chair was unprotected by those disciplinary rules which now fortify it. Speaker and Chairman alike were ludicrously at the mercy of astute practitioners, whether they sat in the Irish camp or were ranged in the scanty column of the Fourth Party. But Lord Playfair had no claim to be regarded as a great Parliament man, whether in the Chair or out of it. When he took part in debate he learned his speeches off by heart, and delivered them much as if he were addressing the audience in a lecture-room. His most successful speech was reeled off in the course of debate arising on the sale of margarine. There the ex-Professor was at home, charming and instructing a crowded House.

When he sat down members felt they knew more about margarine than ever they had dreamt about butter.

Mr. Plimsoll,¹ who survived Lord Playfair only a few days, was the hero of one of the most dramatic scenes ever witnessed in the House of Commons. It broke the almost somnolent peace of the second Session of the Parliament that saw Disraeli in power as well as in office. The Government had been induced to bring in a

Merchant Shipping Bill. It did not arouse enthusiasm in Ministerial circles, and as the end of the Session approached was quietly displaced by a measure dealing with agricultural holdings. The Premier having announced its abandonment, Mr. Plimsoll passionately interposed, entreating Disraeli "not to consign some thousands of men to death." In the excitement of the moment he rose to address the House from the cross bench before the chair of the Serjeant-at-Arms. That is, technically, out of the House, and he was committing a breach of order in endeavouring to speak from it. Amid stormy cries of "Order," he went on shouting at the top of his voice.

MR. PLIMSOLL'S OUTBURST.

"Name! Name!" shocked members cried, meaning that Mr. Plimsoll should be "named" for disorderly conduct. He, mistaking their intent, cried out, "Oh, I'll give names!" Rushing forward into the midst of the House, wildly gesticulating, he pointed at a well-known shipowner sitting behind the Treasury Bench, and reading out a long list of ships

¹ Died 1898.

lost at sea, gave notice that he would ask the President of the Board of Trade whether those ships belonged to the member whom he named.

The turmoil now reached stormy heights. Members on both sides added to it by shouting "Order! Order!" Mr. Plimsoll, ordinarily the mildest-mannered of men, developed a strange passion for standing on one leg, perhaps dimly feeling that that was only half as bad as standing on two in the middle of the House, where no member should halt when the Speaker is in the Chair. First he stood on the right leg, then on the left, shaking his fist impartially at the Speaker, the Premier, and at the ship-owning member whom he denounced.

"I am determined," he cried, his voice audible amid the uproar, "to unmask the villain who sent these men to their graves."

It was all very wrong. Mr. Plimsoll was compelled to apologise. But Disraeli, a keen judge of signs of the times, found it necessary to set aside all other work in order to add the Merchant Shipping Bill to the Statute-book. Formal notification of Mr. Plimsoll's indiscretion is written in the journals of the House. At the same time he wrote with indelible ink his mark on the side of every vessel that carries the British flag, and the overloading of ships, whether criminal or careless, became a thing of the past.

The fine portrait of the ex-Speaker (Lord Peel), which has formed a principal attraction of the Royal Academy this season, was painted for addition to the unique collection in Speaker's House at Westminster. In the stately dining-room hang counterfeit presentments of Speakers from earliest Parliamentary times. By a curious accident Lord Peel's portrait will not hang in the same room with the long line of his predecessors in the Chair. It is too big for the place. When Mr. Orchardson, R.A., undertook the commission, he sent a man down to measure the allotted space. Through some miscalculation the canvas was planned on too large a scale. The picture completed and sent down to

The Peel
Portrait.

Speaker's House to await the opening of the Academy, the mistake was discovered. The bold British workmen in charge of the treasure were equal to the emergency. The picture was too large for the wall. The wall could not be extended, but the canvas might be cut down. They were preparing to carry out this simple design when the opportune entrance of a member of Mr. Gully's household discovered the intent and frustrated it. The picture in its untrimmed proportions will, as soon as it is returned from the Academy, be hung in a room adjoining that in which the other portraits stare from the walls at successive groups of Her Majesty's Ministers once a year dining in full dress with the Speaker.

Amongst other claims to distinction Mr. Orchardson is the only man, not being a member of the House of Commons, who ever "moved the Speaker into the Chair." In this particular case it was an ex-Speaker. That is a mere detail, not affecting the unique distinction. Lord Peel, after the ordinary fashion, gave sittings to the artist at his studio. It was necessary to the completeness of the situation that the ex-Speaker, arrayed in wig and gown, should be seated in the Chair of the House of Commons. The Chair could not be spared for transport to Portland Place, even if it were practicable to move it. When the work was nearly finished, Lord Peel made tryst with the artist at the House of Commons, and there Mr. Orchardson literally "moved him into the Chair."

A curious incident befell during the operation. One morning a member of the Press Gallery on duty in one of the Committee-rooms, bethought him of a paper he had left in his drawer in the Gallery of the House of Commons. Proceeding thither he was amazed, even shocked, on glancing down from behind the Speaker's Chair to observe a newspaper held in an unseen hand projecting from the edge of the sacred piece of furniture! Was it possible that one of the workmen—peradventure the charwoman—suspending his (or her) labours, handsomely remunerated by a vote on the Civil Service Estimates, was

**"Moving the
Speaker into
the Chair."**

**An unrecorded
Sitting in the
Commons.**

lolling in the Speaker's Chair reading the morning newspaper?

Moving softly towards the left so as to come in full side view of the Chair, the startled Pressman discovered Mr. Orchardson sitting at his easel, quietly working away at his picture, whilst Lord Peel sat in the Chair occupied by him through twelve memorable Sessions, reading his *Times*.

Out of the artist's studio the portrait was first seen by House of Commons men on the occasion of Mrs. Gully's "At Homes" in the early weeks of the present Session. Among the company gathered round The Picture as
a Portrait. it on both nights it was astonishing to find how few there were to praise. It might be a picture, they said, but it was no portrait. Particular objection was taken to the alleged fact that the Speaker had only one eye. Some one, probably Mr. Caldwell, having "caught" the other, had permanently appropriated it.

That and other seeming defects were attributable simply to the height at which the picture was hung. Spectators were fain to throw back the head and look up at it, thus getting curious and fatal foreshortening effect.

A similar drawback attached to Lord Randolph Churchill's bust when placed in the corridor leading to the central lobby of the House of Commons. It was stuck on a pedestal at least a foot too high. When Lord Randolph was still with us, in the flesh, men were not accustomed to regard him from the point of view of looking up at his chin and nostrils—except, indeed, on the historic occasion when, on the defeat of Mr. Gladstone's Government on the 8th of June 1885, he jumped on the corner seat below the gangway and, uproariously


THE BUST OF LORD RANDOLPH
CHURCHILL.

cheering, wildly waved his hat. Much disappointment was expressed, a feeling that will be removed when the authorities consent to place a really clever work of art in a suitable position. Lord Peel's portrait being hung on the line at the Academy became quite another thing. It is not only a great painting worthy of an old master—it is the living portrait of a great man. When Lord Randolph's bust is dropped a foot in height it will be equally advantaged.

It is striking evidence of the intuition of genius that Mr. Orchardson has preserved the look of Speaker Peel on one

of those not infrequent occasions during his turbulent times when he only partially succeeded in repressing feelings of stormy indignation. The R.A. was not, for example, present when Mr. Peel admonished the Cambrian Railway directors, for breach of privilege in their dealing with a station-master who had given embarrassing evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons. Nor did he a year later see and hear him turn and rend Mr.

206

THE EX-SPEAKER—SCATHING INDIGNATION.

Conybeare, who, in supplement of newspaper attacks on the Speaker, had for weeks kept on the paper an offensive resolution directed against him. Yet looking at the portrait, memory recalls the spectacle of the affrighted directors at the Bar, as Mr. Peel "admonished" them. Or one can hear him as, trembling in every fibre with indignation, he rose to full height and, turning upon the member for Cambourne seated below the gangway, with head hung down arms sullenly folded, thundered forth, "And now, forsooth! under the guise of performing a public duty, he charges

me with the grossest offence possible to a man in my position."

Mr. Orchardson saw neither of these things, and yet he has preserved for all time Mr. Speaker Peel as he then looked.

Through the Session the House of Lords meet four days a week at four o'clock in the afternoon. The doors are not open till a quarter past four, the interval under-

The Lords at
Prayer.

stood to be occupied by their lordships in devotion. As a matter of fact, it often happens that during this period the House is empty and silent. The House

sometimes sits in its capacity as the final Court of Appeal. In such case it is regarded as an ordinary meeting of the House. In the morning the Lord Chancellor takes his seat on the Woolsack with customary ceremony, and the proceedings open with prayer. When the judicial business is finished the House does not adjourn. The sitting is "suspended," being resumed at the customary hour in the afternoon.

But there are no more prayers, nor does the

THE LORD CHANCELLOR QUIETLY DROPS IN.

Lord Chancellor again enter in State, quietly dropping in from the doorway by the Throne to take his seat on the Woolsack.

The identity of the House of Lords sitting as a Court of Appeal and as a legislative assembly is perfect in theory. In the great betting appeal case, which came before the

House in May, the whole body of peers—six Princes of the Blood, two archbishops, twenty-two dukes, twenty-two marquises, 121 earls, thirty viscounts, twenty-four bishops, 387 barons, sixteen Scottish and twenty-eight Irish representative peers—might, had they pleased, have met to take part in deciding the momentous question, "What is a place?" The late Lord Denman, jealous of the privileges of a peer, on one occasion not only insisted upon his right to sit in an appeal case, but ventured to offer a few observations in supplement of the judgment of the learned lords. He did not repeat the experiment.

The Court of Appeal is ordinarily composed of the Lord Chancellor for the time being, and other peers who have sat on the Woolsack or the judicial Bench, or have served as Law Officers of the Crown. The most frequent attendants are Lord Ashbourne, Lord Herschell, Lord Watson, Lord Hobhouse, Lord Macnaghten, Lord Shand, Lord Davey, and Lord James of Hereford. What these pundits do not know about law is, perhaps, not worth mentioning.

Up to a recent period, it was the custom for the junior bishop last admitted to a seat in the House of Lords daily to officiate at prayer-time. It was Dr. Ridding, **The youngest Bishop strikes.** the Bishop of Southwell, who freed the neck of the youngest bishop from this intolerable yoke. The newly-appointed Bishop of Southwell was son-in-law of Lord Selborne, at the time Lord Chancellor. He effectively pleaded his hard case, and at the instance of the Lord Chancellor a new arrangement was made whereby the bishops take weekly turns at prayer-time. As there are twenty-four of them, it does not often happen that a bishop gets more than one turn in a Session.

Once a clergyman always a clergyman is an old saying, meaning that a man admitted to holy orders cannot divest himself of them. This particularly affects **"The Hon. and Reverend Member."** reverend gentlemen so far as the House of Commons is concerned, since they may not offer themselves as Parliamentary candidates. Nevertheless, there

is in the present House at least one member¹ who has been in the Church, and who, having left it, availed himself of a recent statute to clear his disability. He was, indeed, rector of a plump parish, and proudly preserves the record that he restored its church at an outlay of £10,000. I rather fancy that early in his rectorial career his attention was diverted by the attraction of dogs. There is no reason why a parish parson shall not keep a dog or two. When it comes to three hundred, the number seems to exceed the area of the pale of the Church.

The rector was a born dog-fancier, with hereditary skill in training, and to this day is the proud possessor of a multitude of prize medals, gold and otherwise. He may possibly have begun to drift away from the Church drawn by the dogs. What directly decided his fate was an accident in the discharge of his rectorial functions. Being called upon to officiate at a wedding, he, somehow or other, married the wrong man. How it came about is not at this day clearly explained. Probably, whilst the bridegroom-elect was of a retiring disposition, the best man was what in politics is called of pushful tendencies. However that be, when the ceremony was over and the rector was benevolently regarding his handiwork, his error was pointed out to him.

It was very awkward ; but nothing could be better than the conduct of the whole party. Above all things they desired to save their beloved pastor from annoyance, so they frankly accepted the situation. The best man went off with the bride. What became of the bridegroom, and what relations he subsequently held with the unexpectedly established household, I have never heard.

Sir John Brunner modestly disclaims the sole conception of the idea with which, at the outbreak of the Hispano-American War, he fascinated the civilised world. His suggestion was that, instead of the Great Powers each having its own Navy, adding vastly to national

A private
Ironclad.

¹ Mr. Macdona.

taxation by systematic competition, they should provide out of a joint purse two Navies of equal strength, hiring them out to any two nations bent upon fighting. Sir John tells me the germ of the idea lies in a proposal once actually made to him by a well-known naval constructor. He wanted Sir John to give him a commission to build an ironclad as his private property. Sir John pointed out that he did not particularly want an ironclad. But the naval constructor demonstrated that, regarded strictly as an investment, it was better even than Brunner Mond ordinary shares at par.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER: "NO THANKS, I DON'T WANT ANY IRONCLADS TO-DAY."

"You never know from day to day," he said, "what may turn up. War may break out to-morrow, when up goes the price of ironclads. You sell out; clear a little fortune."

The prospect was alluring, but nothing practical came of the interview. Sir John had nowhere to put the ironclad, the space at the back of the houses in Ennismore Gardens being limited. "And," as he remarked, "you can't leave an ironclad in your hall as if it were a bicycle." The events of the spring showed the naval constructor was right. If Sir John Brunner had last April chanced to have had an ironclad in stock, he could have sold it at his own price either to Spain or the United States.

CHAPTER XVII

SEPTEMBER

MORE than four years have elapsed since, viewing the House of Commons from behind the Speaker's Chair,

A Vacant one's glance
Place. instinctively

turned to, and lingered upon, the noble figure on the Treasury Bench seated opposite the brass-bound box. No man is indispensable to mankind. But in the interval since, on the 1st of March 1894, Mr. Gladstone finally walked out of the House of Commons, members have frequently had occasion to realise how irreparable is their loss. When he spoke, he uplifted debate from whatever rut of mediocrity it may have fallen into. That was the

WALKING OUT FOR THE LAST TIME.

power of the orator. When he sat silent, his mere presence communicated to the House a sense of dignity and a

moral strength easier to feel than to describe. That was the quality of the man.

I do not propose to attempt to add to the far-sounding tribute of applause and admiration which resounded over the death-bed and the grave of the great Englishman.¹ I have, rather, strung together some reminiscences such as may be discreetly withdrawn from a record of personal association with which I was for some years honoured.

209

HE TOOK A GREAT INTEREST IN *PUNCH*.

One day at luncheon at Dalmeny, during the campaign of 1885, Mr. Gladstone turned the conversation upon *Punch* work, showing keen interest in the Wednesday dinner, and in the *personnel* of the staff. A year or two later, when, being in Opposition, he was at fuller leisure, I asked him to dinner to meet a few of my colleagues. He replied :—

4 WHITEHALL GARDENS,
Nov. 14, '88.

DEAR MR. LUCY—I thank you much for the invitation to join the goodly company to be assembled round your table on the 11th of Dec. But I am living in hope of escape to the country before that date, and therefore I fear I am precluded from accepting your kind invitation. At the same time, if the dinner is in any case to come off, and if it were allowed me in the event of my being in or near London to offer myself, I should thankfully accept such a reservation.
—Faithfully yours,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

¹ Mr. Gladstone died 19th May 1898.

The dinner came off in May of the following year. In addition to the editor and the artists of *Punch*, the company included Earl Granville and Lord Charles Beresford. Mr. Gladstone evidently enjoyed the company, and was in bounding spirits. We were all struck on this close view with surprise at his amazing physical and mental virility, at that epoch noted by every observer of the veteran statesman in public life. He had just entered upon that term of four-score years at which, according to the Psalmist, man's days are but labour and sorrow. Yet the only indications of advanced age were observable in increasing deafness and a slight huskiness of voice.

Deafness was at this time a failing shared by Lord Granville. Talking to either, it was desirable to raise the voice above conversational level. Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville, though separated by the breadth of the table, and both deaf, were able to make each other hear without exceptional effort in raising or modulating the voice.

A notable thing about Mr. Gladstone's face at that date, a marvel to the end, was the brightness of his eyes. They were fuller, more unclouded, than those of many a man under fifty. As he talked—and his talk was like the bubbling of an illimitable water-spring—the huskiness of his voice wore off. To every one's delight, he did most of the talking. But there was not then—nor on any other of the occasions when I have been privileged to sit within the circle of his company was there—any appearance of his monopolising conversation. As Du Maurier wittily said, he was “a most attractive listener.”

“AN ATTRACTIVE LISTENER.”

He had never been in Du Maurier's company before, but took to him with quick appreciation and evident delight. Almost immediately after Du Maurier had been presented to him, the conversation turned upon Homer. For ten minutes Mr. Gladstone talked about Homer, with glowing glance and the deep, rich tones of voice that accompanied any unusual emotion. Homer, he insisted, evidently did not like Venus—Aphrodite, as Mr. Gladstone preferred to call her. He cited half-a-dozen evidences of Homer's distaste for a goddess usually fascinating to mankind.

Pictures and artists he discussed, with special reference to the picture shows at the time open in London. He said
Millais. he always liked to go round a picture-gallery in the company of an artist.

"Artists," he said, "looking at a picture always see in it less to criticise, more to admire, than is possible to ordinary people. An artist sees more in a man's face than you or I can."

For many years preceding his retirement to Hawarden, Mr. Gladstone was accustomed to make tryst with Sir William Agnew in the early morning of the opening of the Royal Academy. Sir William once told me he insisted upon seeing everything, his critical remarks upon the varied pictures being singularly acute. At the date of this dinner Mr. Gladstone had had his portrait painted not less than thirty-five times. How many times he has been photographed is a sum beyond even his power of computation. He spoke with warm admiration and esteem of Millais.

"I have had the good fortune," he said, "to fall into the hands of a great artist, who made the minimum of demand upon my somewhat occupied time. Millais came to know me so well that sittings of five hours sufficed him for his most elaborate portrait, and this time I was able to give with real pleasure."

"Is Millais, then, a charming companion when at his work?"

"Yes," said Mr. Gladstone, "but not only because he talks.

Just to watch him at his easel is a delight. He throws his whole heart and soul into his canvas."

Talking about Mr. Bright, he spoke regretfully of the carelessness with which his old friend dealt with himself in the matter of health. Mr. Bright.

"Bright," he said emphatically, "did nothing he should do to preserve his health, and everything he should not."

If he had only been wise, and wise in time, there was, in Mr. Gladstone's opinion, no reason in the world why he should not, on that May Day 1889, have been alive, hale and strong. But he would never listen to advice about himself. Mr. Gladstone told a funny little story about his habits in this respect. Up to within a period of ten years preceding his death Mr. Bright had no regular, at least no recognised, medical attendant. There was some mysterious anonymous person to whom he occasionally went for advice, and of whom he spoke oracularly.

"But," said Mr. Gladstone, with that curious approach to a wink that sometimes varied his grave aspect, "he would never tell his name."

Somewhere about the year 1879 Mr. Bright surprised Sir Andrew Clark by one morning appearing in his consultation-room. Sir Andrew, who knew all about his eccentricities in the manner of medical attendance, asked him how it was he came to see him.

"Oh," said Mr. Bright, "it's Gladstone. He never will let me rest about the state of my health."

Long neglect had irretrievably wrought mischief, but Mr. Bright acknowledged the immense benefit derived from following the directions of Mr. Gladstone's friend and physician, and nothing more was heard of the anonymous doctor.

Mr. Gladstone seems to have been always on the lookout for opportunity to give a little friendly advice to Mr. Bright. One thing he strongly recommended Sleeping Habits. was never to think of political affairs on getting into bed or immediately on waking in the morning.

"I never do that," Mr. Gladstone said. "I never allow

myself to do it. In the most exciting political crises I absolutely dismiss current controversies from my mind when

I get into bed. I will not take up the line of thought again till I am up and dressing in the morning. I told Bright about this. He said, 'That is all very well for you. But my way is exactly the reverse. I think over all my speeches when I am in bed.'

Like Sancho Panza, Mr. Gladstone had a great gift of sleep. Seven hours he insisted upon getting, "and," he added with a smile, "I should like to have eight. I detest getting up in the morning, and every morning I hate it just as sharply. But one can do everything

A LITTLE FRIENDLY ADVICE

by habit. When I have had my seven hours' sleep, my habit is to get out of bed."

His memory was amazingly minute, more particularly for events that took place half a century ago. Oddly enough,

An early
Appreciation. where memory failed him was in the matter of human faces. This gift precious to, indispensable for, Princes was withheld from him. He told how somewhere in the late thirties there lived in London a man with a system, now sunk into oblivion, by which he brought electricity to bear in the direction of reading character.

"There were three faculties he told me wherein I was lacking," said Mr. Gladstone. "One of them was that I had no memory for faces; I am sorry to say it was, and remains, quite true."

It would have been interesting to hear what were the other two faculties absence of which the wise man detected.

Mr. Gladstone did not say. But forgetfulness of faces he admitted and lamented, probably recognising in the failing occasion of some personal misunderstandings.

He talked a good deal about old Parliamentary days, lapsing into that gentle tone of charming reminiscence which on quiet Tuesday evenings or Friday nights Old Days in the Commons. sometimes delighted the House of Commons. One scene he recalled with as much ease and fulness of detail as if it had happened the week before. Its date was the 4th of June 1841. Sir Robert Peel had moved a resolution of No Confidence in Her Majesty's Government.

"You were there," said Mr. Gladstone, pointing eagerly across the table to Lord Granville. "You had not left the Commons then. Didn't you vote in the division?"

Lord Granville smilingly shook his head, and to Mr. Gladstone's pained amazement positively could not remember what WHAT! NOT REMEMBER IT? IT WAS ONLY FORTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO. had taken place in the House of Commons on a particular night sped forty-eight years earlier. To Mr. Gladstone the scene was as vivid as if it had taken place at the morning sitting he had quitted to join us at dinner. Naturally, as the issue of the pending division involved the fate of the Ministry, party passion ran high. Forces were so evenly divided that every member seemed to hold in the hollow of his hand the fate of the Ministry.

"The Whips of those days," he observed parenthetically, "somehow or other seemed to know more precisely than they do now how a division would go. It was positively known that there would be a majority of one. On which side it would be was the only doubt. There was a member of the Opposition almost at death's door. He *was* dead," Mr. Gladstone added emphatically, "except that he had

just a little breath left in him. The question was, could he be brought to the House? The Whips said he must come, and so they carried him down. He was wheeled in in a Bath-chair. To this day I never forget the look on his face. His glassy eyes were upturned, his jaws stiff. We, a lot of young Conservatives clustered round the door, seeing the Bath-chair, thought at first they had brought down a corpse. But he voted, and the resolution which turned out Lord Melbourne's Government was carried by a majority of one."

Mr. Gladstone did not affect that indifference to the written word in the newspapers with which Mr. Arthur Balfour is equipped. He had his favourites among the The News-papers. dailies and weeklies. Of the latter was for many years the *Spectator*, a paper abandoned, as stated in a published record of private conversation, because in its new manner, soured by the Home Rule controversy, it "touched him on the raw."

For many years I contributed a London Letter to the columns of a Liverpool paper, edited by my old friend and, as Mr. Pumblechook used to describe himself in connection with Pip, "early Benefactor," now Sir Edward Russell. Mr. Gladstone once surprised, and, I need hardly add, highly honoured me by saying that when in residence at Hawarden, the *Liverpool Daily Post* being the earliest paper to reach him, the first thing he turned to was the London Letter.

"Dear Mr. Lucy," he writes under date Jan. 14, 1890—"I hope we may meet in town, and I can then speak to you more freely than I like to write respecting a gentleman with whom I have been intimate for thirty years, and in whose uprightness of intention I fully believe, but who has exposed himself deplorably by his last effusion to the *Times*. I had read your comparison with great interest where I read you daily, viz. in the *Liverpool Daily Post*."

The gentleness and lingering affection with which Mr. Gladstone, even in the white heat of personal political controversy, speaks of an old friend makes it possible History repeating itself. to mention that the one he alludes to in this connection was the late Duke of Argyll. The comparison

which attracted him was attempted to be established between himself in this year 1890 and Sir Robert Walpole in 1742. At the period Mr. Gladstone wrote Mr. Chamberlain had not finally made up his mind to throw in his lot with his old

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL WRITES TO THE *TIMES*.

foemen the Tories. He dreamed a dream of what he called "a National Party." In the article to which Mr. Gladstone refers it was pointed out that a hundred and fifty years earlier an almost exactly parallel case was set forth in English history. In 1742, at the close of a Ministry that had run a splendid career of twenty years, the factions arrayed against Sir Robert Walpole gained force sufficient to encourage his arch-enemies to strike the long-impending blow. The Opposition of the day was divided into two parties diametrically opposed to each other in political opinion, just as were the Dissident Liberals and the Conservatives of 1890. And as these latter were each all one in their hatred of Mr. Gladstone, so the manifold opposition of 1742 were united in animosity towards Walpole.

"Hatred of Walpole," Macaulay writes, "was almost the only feeling common to them. On this one point they

concentrated their whole strength. So much did they narrow the disputed ground, so purely personal did they make the question, that they threw out friendly hints to other members of the Administration, and declared that they refused quarter to the Prime Minister alone."

By precision of coincidence the leading part in the cabal against Walpole was taken by the then Duke of Argyll, whose successor in the title a hundred and fifty years later took a leading part in the revolt against a greater than Walpole.

In January 1886 I was called upon to undertake the Editorship of the leading Liberal paper in London. In

The ordinary times the post is one involving incessant
Daily News. labour and grave responsibility. But at least the party whose views are represented are pretty fairly decided as to what those views are, and moderately united in giving them expression. Within a few weeks of my assuming the Editorship, the *Daily News* was faced by the problem of taking instant decision as to whether it would stand by Mr. Gladstone in the matter of Home Rule, or whether it would join its colleagues of the Liberal Press which, without exception among London morning papers, went over to the other side. What happened is picturesquely set forth in the subjoined letter, one of the last, if not absolutely the last, written by Mr. Gladstone from the Premier's room in Downing Street:—

10 DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL,
 March 5, '94.

DEAR MR. LUCY—Though under very great pressure I must thank you for your kind letter.

I must *add* a word to your statement of the solitude in which the *Daily News* took and gallantly maintained its post. I remember a day on which the *Pall Mall Gazette* under its clever, but queer, erratic Editor published an object-lesson of the field of battle on the Irish question. On one side were *D.N.* and *P.M.G.*—on the other the rest. I took my *P.M.G.*, drew a noose round the fighting figure, and with a long line with a \wedge at the end of it, carried it over to the other side, and by this verifying process placed the support of the *P.M.G.* at its true value, and left *D.N.* occupying absolutely alone its place of honour. I hope my account is intelligible.—I remain, faithfully yours,

W. E. GLADSTONE

When the split in the Liberal Party occasioned by the Home Rule movement showed itself there was among other difficulties that of denominating the seceders "Dissentient Liberals." The delicacy of the situation was increased by the natural desire of those

WRITING A POST-CARD.

concerned for the welfare of the Liberal Party not to widen the rift by use of opprobrious names. Otherwise there was a term ready to hand in the phrase applied by the Northerners when the Southern States withdrew from the Union. After much cogitation I hit upon the phrase "Dissentient Liberals," which, used in the leading columns of the *Daily News*, became generally adopted.

The following memorandum from Mr. Gladstone, written to me during the progress of the General Election of 1886, shows how anxious was his care in the matter:—

I am really desirous that the newspapers should not go on representing as D.L. those who are distinctly L., like Talbot. If there is doubt about Sir H. Vivian, Villiers, and others, that ought

rather to be given in our favour than against us. Further, the old division into Liberals and Tories ought to be regularly given, *as well as* the division into Irish and anti-Irish. At any rate, as soon as total L. overtops C., which at first it does not—but best, I think, without waiting for this.

That phrase, “as soon as total L. overtops C.,” shows how sanguine he was up to the last that the country would respond to his appeal. As history records, the achievement was never completed, the poll finally made up showing the new House of Commons to consist of 317 Conservatives, 74 Dissident Liberals, 191 Liberals, and 84 Parnellites, leaving Mr. Gladstone in a hopeless minority of 116.

Even with the fresh soreness of the wounding, Mr. Gladstone habitually refrained from public resentment of the **Mr. Chamberlain.** Thanes who in 1886 fled from him. If occasion arose to answer them in debate, he was even more than usually courteous in his address.

There was one memorable occasion when he could not resist an invitation to fall upon and rend his severed friend. I am reminded of the incident by a post-card, here reproduced, as illustrating not only Mr. Gladstone's familiar use of this medium of communication, but his characteristic prevision in beginning at the very top in small handwriting, so that if the spirit moved him he might utilise every scrap of space.

“One word of thanks, however hasty,” he writes from 1 Carlton Gardens, April 12, 1892, “for the brilliant article. It had but one fault, that of excess with reference to the merits of the principal subject of it.”

The article alluded to appeared in the “Cross Bench” series of the *Observer*. It dealt with a memorable scene in the House on the 8th of April 1892, when, in the course of debate, Mr. Gladstone, rising without a note of preparation, fell upon Mr. Chamberlain and belaboured him with effect all the greater since the onslaught was free from slightest display of brutal force. It is difficult to say on which side of the House the joy of the sport was more acutely felt and unreservedly displayed. There dwells still

in the memory recollection of the scene in which the little comedy was set—the crowded House; the laughing faces all turned upon the picturesque figure standing at the table;

*Our words of thanks have
been for the brilliant article.
It had but one fault, that of
being, with reference to the
main (principal) subject of
it. Yours faithfully W. G.
'Cairn' Garden Apr. 12. 92 -*

FACSIMILE OF ONE OF MR. GLADSTONE'S POST-CARDS.

Mr. Chamberlain gallantly trying to smile back on the benevolent visage turned upon him with just a flash of malice in the gleaming eyes; and, that no touch might be missing to complete the perfectness of the scene, just behind

Mr. Chamberlain, sitting well forward on the bench with folded arms, and on his face a mechanical grin of perhaps qualified appreciation, Mr. Jesse Collings, "the hon. member for Bordesley, the faithful henchman of my right hon. friend, who would cordially re-echo that or any other opinion."

Immediately after the result of the General Election of 1886 was made known, Mr. Gladstone betook himself to

A Holiday Task. Hawarden and cheerfully entered on a quite new field of labour, his ordinary fashion of seeking

recreation. A letter dated December 18, 1886, gives an interesting peep at him holiday-making :—

DEAR MR. LUCY—I read the article in the *D.N.*, and thought it clever, entertaining, and quite fair: the one in the *P.M. Gazette*, the secret of which I think I know, rather brutal. My ambition during my "holiday" has been to give eighteen hours a week out of seventy, or one-fourth, to the prosecution of a study of which the Olympian Religion is a central part. But the O.R. of your articles is not mine. Mine is the religion of the Homeric Poems, and a totally different affair. For thirty years I have had this on hand. But of this appropriation I have fallen very far short. It has been my maximum.

You may like to have the enclosed, from a special correspondent of the *Journal des Débats*.—Faithfully yours,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

The following letter, dated from Dollis Hill, April 28, 1887, is interesting for its reference to Mr. Parnell. There was communicated to the *Daily News* a report of a statement made by Mr. Gladstone at a dinner given by Mr. Armitstead. To this he alludes in the postscript :—

Mr. Parnell's Offer to retire from Political Life.

DEAR MR. LUCY—1. Will you, if you think proper, print the enclosed letter from me as a reply to an Edinburgh Correspondent, and let it be posted?

2. Mr. W—— is an excellent man, but is behind the world. To the Eighty Club that I had long desired, and had made efforts for Liberal co-operation, outside the Irish question, but *without effect*.

A *pointed* effort of that kind was made many weeks, nay, I think, several *months*, ago.—Yours faithfully,

The Editor, *Daily News*.

W. E. GLADSTONE,

The account given you of the Armitstead dinner goes beyond the mark, and evidently mixes the writer's impressions with my statement, which was simply that Mr. P. offered to retire from Parliament if I thought it right to desire it. I spoke from recollection.

Paragraph 2 of this letter is a little obscure, suggesting accidental omission of a phrase. I give it as it was written. The fault is redeemed by the delightfully brief but perfect description of Mr. W——, who is still alive, as excellent and as far behind the world as ever. I saw him looking reverently on from the fringe of the crowd of personal friends gathered in Westminster Hall round the bier of the lost Leader.

Of all the touching episodes in the progress from the death-bed at Hawarden Castle to the graveside at Westminster Abbey, this last muster of old friends and ^{in Westminster} colleagues round the coffin in Westminster Hall ^{Hall.} was the most pathetic, the grandest in its simplicity. When Eleanor, wife of Edward I., was borne from Lincoln to the same burial ground, her husband erected at various places Crosses to mark where she had rested on the way. For those present in Westminster Hall on Saturday, the 28th of May 1898, there will ever live among the storied recollections of the fane the remembrance that its roof for a while enshrined the coffin of Mr. Gladstone, making his last halt on the way to his final dwelling-place.

SESSION 1899

CHAPTER XVIII

FEBRUARY

THE proceedings at the opening of the forthcoming Session, the fifth in the fourteenth Parliament of Queen Victoria, will be fully reported in the morning papers. There is a proceeding preliminary to the Speaker's taking the Chair which, from its history and character, is of necessity conducted in secret. It is the search through the underground chambers and passages of the House with design to frustrate any schemes in the direction of a dissolution of Parliament that descendants or disciples of Guy Fawkes may have in hand. The present generation has

A BEEF-EATER TEMP.
HENRY VIII.

seen, more especially when a Conservative Government have been in power, some revolutionary changes in Parliamentary procedure. The solemn search underneath the Houses of Parliament, preceding the opening of the revolving Sessions ever since Gunpowder Plot, is still observed with all the pomp and circumstance attached to it three hundred years ago.

The investigation is conducted under the personal direction of the Lord Great Chamberlain, who is answerable with his head for any miscarriage. When a peer comes newly to the office he makes a point of personally accompanying the expedition. But, though picturesque, and essential to the working of the British Constitution, it palls in time, and the Lord Great Chamberlain, relying upon the discretion, presence of mind, and resource of his Secretary, usually leaves it to him. Oddly enough, the House of Commons is not officially represented at the performance, the avowed object of which is not, primarily, to secure the safety of the Lords and Commons, but to avert the conclusion aimed at by Guy Fawkes—namely, to blow up the Sovereign. It is as the personal representative of the Queen that the Lord Great Chamberlain takes the business in hand.

To this day the result of the inquiry is directly communicated to Her Majesty. Up to a period dating back less than fifty years, as soon as the search was over, the Lord Great Chamberlain despatched a messenger on horseback to the Sovereign, informing him (or her) that all was well, and that Majesty might safely repair to Westminster to open the new Session. To-day the telegraph wires carry the assurance to the Queen wherever she may chance to be in residence on the day before the opening of Parliament.

Whilst the Commons take no official part in the performance, the peers are represented either by Black Rod or by his deputy, the Yeoman Usher, who is accompanied by half-a-dozen stalwart doorkeepers and messengers, handy in case of a fray. The Board of Works are represented by the Chief Surveyor of the London District, accompanied by the Clerk of Works to the Houses of Parliament. The Chief Engineer of the House of Commons, who is responsible for all the underground workings of the building, leads the party, the Chief Inspector of Police boldly marching on his left hand.

These are details prosaic enough. The nineteenth century has engrafted them on the sixteenth. The

The Search
Party.

picturesqueness of the scene comes in with the appearance of the armed contingent. This is made up of some fourteen

or sixteen of the Yeomen of the Guard, who arrive at the place of rendezvous armed with halberds and swords. The halberds look well, but this search is, above all, a business undertaking. It is recognised that for close combat in the vaults and narrow passages of the building halberds would be a little unwieldy. They are accordingly stacked in the Prince's Chamber, the Yeomen fearlessly marching on armed with nothing but their swords.



INSPECTOR HORSLEY.

Clad in their fifteenth-century costume, they are commanded by an officer who wears a scarlet swallow-

tailed coat, cocked hat, and feathers, gilt spurs shining at his martial heel. The spurs are not likely to be needed. But the British officer knows how to prepare for any emergency.

Following the Yeomen of the Guard stride half-a-dozen martial men in costumes dating from the early part of the present century. They wear swallow-tail coats, truncated cone caps, with the base of the cone uppermost. They are armed with short, serviceable cutlasses, and batons such as undertakers' men carry, suggesting that they have come to bury Guy Fawkes, not to catch him.

Most of the underground chambers and passages of the Houses of Parliament are lit by electricity. Failing that, they are flooded with gas. When search for Guy Fawkes was first ordered, the uses of gas had not been discovered, much less the possibilities of electricity. Lanterns were the only thing, so lanterns are still used. As the dauntless company of men-at-arms tramp along the subterranean passages, it is pretty to see the tallow dips in the swinging lanterns shamed by the wanton light that beats from the electric lamps.

Her Majesty's Ministers meeting Parliament at the opening of their fifth Session remain happy in the reflection that their position is not endangered by any ^{Parliamentary} mines dug within the limits of their own escarp- ^{Caves.} ment. It is different in the opposite camp. The first thing good Liberals do as soon as their own party comes into power is to commence a series of manoeuvres designed to thrust it forth. Sometimes they are called "caves," occasionally "tea-room cabals." But, as Mr. Gladstone learned in the 1868-74 Parliament, in that of 1880-85, and, with tragic force, in the Parliament which made an end of what Mr. Chamberlain called "The Stop-Gap Government," they all mean the same thing. Lord Rosebery when he came to the Premiership found the habit was not eradicated.

A CAVE-MAN.

The condition of men and things in the House of Commons when Parliament met after the General Election in July 1895, was rarely favourable to the formation of "caves" on the Ministerial side. To begin with, the Government had such an overwhelming majority that the game of playing at being independent was so safe that its enjoyment was not forbidden to the most loyal Unionist. Given that condition, there were existent personal circumstances that supplied abundant material for cave-making. The necessity imposed on Lord Salisbury of finding place in his Ministry for gentlemen outside the Conservative camp made it impossible not only to satisfy reasonable aspirations on the part of new men of his own party, but even to re-instate some ex-Ministers. Some, like Baron de Worms,

were shelved with a peerage. Others, overlooked, were left to find places on back benches above or below the gangway.

Of men who held office in Lord Salisbury's former Administration, Mr. Jackson, Sir James Fergusson, Sir W. Hart-Dyke, and Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett were left out in the cold. Whilst most of the leading members of the Liberal Unionist wing, including Mr. Jesse Collings and Mr. Powell Williams, were provided with office, Mr. Courtney's claims were ignored, and Sir John Lubbock's were probably never considered.

SHELVED WITH A PEERAGE.
(BARON DE WORMS.)

Amongst Conservative members who had not been in office, but were not alone in their belief that they were well fitted for it, were

An old
Parliamentary
Hand.

Mr. Gibson Bowles and Mr. George Wyndham —the latter since deservedly provided for.

Moreover, to a corner seat below the gangway returned Mr. James Lowther, thought good enough in Disraeli's time to be Under-Secretary for the Colonies and Chief Secretary for Ireland. Since the death of Lord Beaconsfield kings had arisen in Egypt who knew not "Jemmy," or, at least, forgot his existence at a time when Ministerial offices were dispensed.

"WHO KNEW NOT JEMMY."

The member for East Thanet,

first returned for York in the summer of 1865, is not only personally popular in the House, but has high standing as an old Parliamentary hand. If he had liked to turn rusty, he might have done the Conservative Party at least as much harm as Mr. Horsman when in the same mood wrought to the party with which, to the last, he ranked himself. From time to time Mr. Lowther has vindicated his independence of Ministerial discipline by dividing the House on the question of the futility of reading, at the commencement of recurring Sessions, the standing order forbidding peers to interfere with elections. He has not gone beyond that, and whenever attempt has been made from the Opposition side to inflict damage on the best of all Governments, he has ranged himself on the side of Ministers.

Sir W. Hart-Dyke, Sir James Fergusson, and the late Sir W. Forwood, instead of openly resenting neglect, on more than one occasion went out of their way to defend the colleagues of the Prime Minister who ^{Overlooked.} slighted them. Mr. Wyndham was last Session not less generously loyal. Mr. Tommy Bowles, it is true, has been on occasions fractious. As for Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, when he recovered from the shock of realisation that Lord Salisbury had not only formed a Ministry without including him in its membership,



THE HUMBLE FUNCTION OF THE FOOTBALL.

but looked as if he would be able to carry it on, he showed signs of resentment. Through successive Sessions he has sedulously endeavoured to embarrass an unappreciative Premier by cunningly devised questions addressed to the Colonial Secretary or to the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Curzon alike proved able

to hold their own, and the Sheffield Knight coming out to kick has found himself fulfilling the humble function of the football.

A more serious defection was threatened last Session as the result of the distrust and discontent in Ministerial circles of Lord Salisbury's foreign policy. **Mr. Yerburch.** Mr. Yerburch, moved by apprehension that the interests of the British Empire in the Far East were at stake, instituted a series of weekly dinners at the Junior Carlton, where matters were talked over. The dinners were excellent, the wines choice, and Mr. Yerburch has a delicate taste in cigars. This meeting at dinner instead of at tea, as was the fashion in the Liberal camp at the time of Mr. Gladstone's trouble over the Irish University Bill in 1873, seemed to indicate manlier purpose. But nothing came of it except a distinct advancement of Mr. Yerburch's position in the House of Commons. He, as spokesman of the malcontents, found opportunity to display a complete mastery of an intricate geographical and political position, combined with capacity for forcibly and clearly stating his case.

Thus Lord Salisbury remained master of himself though China fell. Had Mr. Gladstone been in his position, under precisely similar circumstances, it would have been Her Majesty's Ministry that would have fallen to pieces.

As usual, the recess has seen the final going over to the majority of old members of the House of Commons. Two **Joined the Majority.** who have died since the prorogation were distinct types of utterly divergent classes. There was nothing in common between the Earl of Winchilsea and Mr. T. B. Potter, except that they both sat in the 1880 Parliament, saw the rise of the Fourth Party, and the crumbling away of Mr. Gladstone's magnificent majority. Mr. Potter was by far the older member, having taken his seat for Rochdale on the death of Mr. Cobden in 1865. Except physically, he did not fill a large place in the House, but was much esteemed on both sides for his honest purpose and his genial good-temper.

This last was imperturbable. It was not to be disturbed even by a double misfortune that accompanied one of the Cobden Club's annual dining expeditions to Greenwich. On the voyage out passing Temple Pier, one of the guests fell overboard. At the start on the return journey, another guest, a distinguished Frenchman, stepping aboard as he thought, fell into the gurgling river, and was fished out with a boat-hook. Yet Mr. Potter, President of the Club, largely responsible for the success of the outing, did not on either occasion intermit his beaming smile.

He was always ready to be of service in whatsoever unobtrusive manner. The House cherishes tender memories of a scene in 1890. The fight in Committee-room No. 15 had recently closed. Its memories ^{A Buffer State.} still seared the breasts of the Irish members. Members

THE BUFFER STATE.

were never certain that at any moment active hostilities might not commence even under the eye of the Speaker. One night a motion by Mr. John Morley raising the Irish question brought a large muster of the contending forces. Mr. Parnell, who had temporarily withdrawn from the scene, put in an appearance with the rest. He happened to seat

himself on the same bench as Mr. Justin M'Carthy, whom the majority of the Irish members had elected to succeed him in the leadership. Only a narrow space divided the twain. The most apprehensive did not anticipate militant action on the part of Mr. M'Carthy. But, looking at Mr. Parnell's pale, stern face, knowing from report of proceedings in Committee-room No. 15 what passion smouldered beneath that mild exterior, timid members thought of what might happen, supposing the two rose together diversely claiming the ear of the House as Leader of the Irish Party.

At this moment Mr. T. B. Potter entered and moved slowly up the House like a Thames barge slipping down the river with the tide. He made his way to the bench where the severed Irish Leaders sat, and planted himself out between them, they perforce moving to right and left to make room. Seeing him there, his white waistcoat shimmering in the evening light like the mainsail of an East Indiaman, the House felt that all was well. Mr. Parnell was a long-armed man; but, under whatsoever stress of passion, he could not get at Mr. M'Carthy across the broad space of the member for Rochdale.

Lord Winchilsea sat in this same Parliament as Mr. Finch-Hatton. He early made his mark by a maiden ^{A promising Start.} speech delivered on one of the interminable debates on Egypt. He was content to leave it there, never, as far as I remember, again taking part in set debate. His appearance was striking. Many

THE LATE LORD WINCHILSEA.

years after, he having succeeded to the earldom, I happened to be present when he rose from the luncheon-table at Haverholme Priory to acknowledge the toast of his health. By accident or design he stood under a contemporary portrait

of his great ancestor, Christopher Hatton, Queen Elizabeth's Lord Chancellor. The likeness between the founder of the family and a scion separated by the space of more than three hundred years was almost startling.

Lord Winchilsea aged rapidly. When he made his maiden speech in the House of Commons he had not advanced beyond the stage of the young dandy. His face was a shade of ivory, the pallor made more striking by the coal-black hair. His attitude, like his dress and everything about him, was carefully studied. His left hand, rigidly extended, lightly rested behind his back. His right hand, when not in action, hid its finger-tips in the breast of a closely-buttoned frock-coat. Occasionally he withdrew his hand and made stiff gestures in the air as if he were writing hieroglyphs. Occasionally he emphasised a point by slightly bowing to the amused audience.

The matter of his speech was excellent, its form, occasionally, as extravagant as his get-up. The House roared with laughter when Mr. Finch-Hatton, pointing stiff finger-tips at Mr. Gladstone smiling on the Treasury Bench, invited members to visit the Premier on his uneasy couch and watch him moaning and tossing as the long procession of his pallid victims passed before him. This reminiscence of a scene from *Richard III.* was a great success, though not quite in the manner Mr. Hatton, working it out in his study, had forecast.

A man of great natural capacity, wide culture, and, as was shown in his later connection with agriculture, of indomitable industry, he would, having lived down his extravagances, have made a career in the Commons. Called thence by early doom he went to the Lords, and was promptly and finally extinguished.

Another old member of the House who died in the recess is Mr. Colman. The great mustard manufacturer, whose name was carried on tin boxes to the uttermost ends of the earth, never made his mark ^{Mustered at} J. J. Colman's. in the House of Commons. I doubt whether he ever got so

far as to work off his maiden speech. A quiet, kindly, shrewd man of business, he was content to look on whilst others fought and talked. He came too late to the House to be ever thoroughly at one with it, and took an early opportunity of retiring.

Mr. Gladstone had a high respect for him, and occasionally visited his beautiful home in Norfolk. One of these occasions became historic by reason of Mr. Gladstone unwittingly making a little joke. Coming down to breakfast one morning, and finding the house-party already gathered in the room, Mr. Gladstone cheerily remarked, "What, are we all mustered?"

He never knew why this innocent observation had such remarkable success with Mr. J. J. Colman's guests.

A few more recollections of Mr. Gladstone whilst still in harness. I remember meeting him at a well-known house during the Midlothian campaign of 1885. He **Mr. Gladstone's** came in to luncheon half an hour late, and was **Table-talk.** rallied by the host upon his unpunctuality. "You know," he said, "only the other day you lectured us upon the grace of punctuality at luncheon-time."

Mr. Gladstone took up this charge with energy familiar at the time in the House of Commons when repelling one of Lord Randolph Churchill's random attacks. Finally, he drew from the host humble confession that he had been in error, that so far from recommending punctuality at luncheon-time he had urged the desirability of absence of formality at the meal. "Any one," he said, "should drop in at luncheon when they please and sit where they please."

Through the meal he was in the liveliest humour, talking in his rich, musical voice. After luncheon we adjourned to the library, a room full of old furniture and precious memorials, chiefly belonging to the Stuart times. On the shelves were a multitude of rare books. Mr. Gladstone picked up one, and sitting on a broad window seat, began reading and discoursing about it. Setting out for a walk,

he was got up in a most extraordinary style. He wore a narrow-skirted square-cut tail-coat, made, I should say, in the same year as the Reform Bill. Over his shoulders hung an inadequate cape, of rough hairy cloth, once in vogue but now little seen. On his head was a white soft felt hat. The back view as he trudged off at four-mile-an-hour pace was irresistible.

Mrs. Gladstone watched over him like a hen with its first chicken. She was always pulling up his collar, fastening a button, or putting him to sit in some particular chair out of a draught. These little attentions Mr. Gladstone accepted without remark, with much the placid air a small and good-tempered babe wears when it is being tucked in its cot.

In the Session of 1890, Mr. Gladstone rented a house

AT A FOUR-MILE-AN-HOUR PACE.

An old London House. in St. James's

Square, a big roomy, gloomy mansion, built when George I. was King. On the pillars of the porch stand in admirable preservation two of the wrought-iron extinguishers in which in those days the link-boys used to thrust their torches when they had brought master or mistress home, or convoyed a dinner guest. Inside hideous, light-absorbing, flock wall-papers prevailed. One gained an idea—opportunity rare in these days—of the murkiness amid which our grandfathers dwelt.

Dining there one night, I found the host made up for all household shortcomings. He talked with unbroken flow of spirits, always having more to say on any subject that turned up, and saying it better, than any expert present.

His memory was as amazing as his opportunities of acquiring knowledge had been unique.

As we sat at table he, in his eighty-first year, recalled, as if it had happened the day before, an incident that befell **Memories of Childhood.** when he was eighteen months old. Prowling about the nursery on all fours, there suddenly flashed upon him consciousness of the existence of his nurse, as she towered above him. He remembered her voice and the very pattern of the frock she wore. This was his earliest recollection, his first clear consciousness of existence. His memory of Canning when he stood for Liverpool in 1812 was perfectly clear; indeed, he was then nearly three years old, and took an intelligent interest in public affairs.

Of later date was his recollection of Parliamentary Elections, and the strange processes by which in the good old days they were accomplished. The poll at Liverpool was kept open sometimes for weeks, and the custom was for voters to be shut up in pens ten at a time. At the proper moment they were led out of these enclosures and conducted to the polling-booths, where they recorded their votes. These musters were called "tallies," and the reckoning up of them was a matter watched with breathless interest in the constituency.

It was a point of keen competition which side should first land a "tally" at the polling-booth. Mr. Gladstone **Doctoring a Tally.** told with great gusto of an accident that befell one in the first quarter of the century. The poll opened at eight o'clock in the morning. The Liberals, determined to make a favourable start, marshalled ten voters, and as early as four in the morning filled the pen by the polling-booth. To all appearances the Conservatives were beaten in this first move. But their defeat was only apparent. Shortly after seven o'clock a barrel of beer, conveniently tapped, with mugs handy, was rolled up within hand-reach of the pen, where time hung heavy on the hands of the expectant voters. They naturally regarded this as a delicate attention on the part of their friends, and did full

justice to their hospitable forethought. After a while, consternation fell upon them. Man after man hastily withdrew till the pen was empty, and ten Conservatives, waiting in reserve, rushed in and took possession of the place.

"The beer," said Mr. Gladstone, laughing till the tears came into his eyes, "had been heavily jalaped."

CHAPTER XIX

MARCH

WRITING in an earlier chapter about Mr. Gladstone's first speech in the House of Commons, I quoted a remark made by him on perusal of Mr. M'Carthy's preface to *White's Inner Life of the House of Commons*.
Mr. Gladstone's Maiden Speech.

The historian of *Our Own Times* asserted that the speech fell utterly unnoticed. Mr. Gladstone, jealous for the fame of the young member for Newark, corrected this statement with the remark : " My maiden speech was noticed in debate in a marked manner by Mr. Stanley, who was in charge of the Bill."

Reading over again the memoirs of the Earl of Albemarle, published more than twenty years ago, and now forgotten, I came upon a passage vividly illustrating contemporary opinion about this, now famous, then, in the main, uneventful, epoch in Parliamentary history.

" One evening, on taking my place," Lord Albemarle writes, " I found on his legs a beardless youth, with whose appearance and manner I was greatly struck. He had an earnest, intelligent countenance, and large, expressive black eyes. Young as he was he had evidently what is called ' the ear of the House,' and yet the cause he advocated was not one likely to interest a popular assembly—that of the Planter *versus* the Slave. I had placed myself behind the Treasury Bench. ' Who is he ? ' I asked one of the Ministers. I was answered, ' He is the member for Newark—a young

fellow who will some day make a great figure in Parliament.' My informant was Edward Geoffrey Stanley, then Whig Secretary for the Colonies, and in charge of the Negro Emancipation Bill, afterwards Earl of Derby. The young Conservative orator was William Ewart Gladstone—two statesmen who each subsequently became Prime Minister and Leader of the Party to which he was at this time diametrically opposed."

It is curious to note that Mr. Gladstone, adopting Mr.

A consecrated
Error. M'Carthy's version,
long current with-

out question, speaks of this discourse as "my maiden speech." It was, as contemporary records show, so accepted by the House. As a matter of fact, supported by

AN EARLY APPEARANCE IN THE
PARLIAMENTARY RING.

the irrefragable testimony of the *Mirror of Parliament*, his first speech was delivered on the 21st of February 1833, the subject being the alleged discreditable state of things in Liverpool at parliamentary and municipal elections. The speech of the 3rd of June in the same Session, to which Mr. M'Carthy alludes, was delivered in Committee, upon consideration of resolutions submitted by Stanley, Colonial Secretary, as a preliminary to the emancipation of the West Indian slaves.

On turning back to the Hansard of the day, Mr. Gladstone's recollection of the Ministerial compliment is fully justified. Evidently it made a deep impression on the mind of the young member, remaining with him for more than sixty years. "If the hon. gentleman will permit me to make the observation," said the Colonial Secretary, "I beg

to say I never listened with greater pleasure to any speech than I did to the speech of the hon. member for Newark, who then addressed the House, I believe, for the first time. He brought forward his case and argued it with a temper, an ability, and a fairness which may well be cited as a good model to many older members of this House, and which hold out to this House and to the country grounds of confident expectation that whatever cause shall have the good fortune of his advocacy will derive from it great support."

It will be observed that the Minister spoke without contradiction of Mr. Gladstone's speech as his first appearance on the Parliamentary scene, a circumstance which probably did much to crystallise the error.

More than a hundred years ago a young Prussian clergyman, Moritz by name, visited this country, travelling on foot from London through Oxford as far north as Derby and home by Nottingham. He described his impressions in a series of homely letters written to a friend. The book found modest publication, appearing in this country in a slim volume bearing date 1795. Moritz visited the House of Commons, and in his quiet, matter-of-fact way paints the scene in which Pitt, Fox, and Burke loomed large.

"Passing through Westminster Hall," he reports, "you ascend a few steps at the end, and are led through a dark passage into the House of Commons." Westminster Hall remains to-day as it was when the quiet-mannered, observant Prussian passed through it. The steps at the end are there, but the House of Commons, to which he presently obtained entrance, was, more than half a century later, burned to the ground. Entrance to the Strangers' Gallery in those days was approached, as it is now, by a small staircase.

"The first time I went up this small staircase," says the ingenuous visitor, "and had reached the rails, I saw a very genteel man in black standing there. I accosted him without any introduction, and I asked him whether I might be allowed to go into the gallery. He told me that I must be

introduced by a member, or else I could not get admission there. Now, as I had not the honour to be acquainted with a member, I was under the mortifying necessity of retreating and again going downstairs, as I did much chagrined. And now, as I was sullenly marching back, I heard something said about a bottle of wine which seemed to be addressed to me. I could not conceive what it could mean till I got home, when my obliging landlady told me I should have given the well-dressed man half-a-crown or a couple of shillings for a bottle of wine. Happy in this information, I went again the next day; when the same man who before had sent me away, after I had given him only two shillings, very politely opened the door for me, and himself recommended me to a good seat in the gallery."

Strangers visiting the House of Commons will know how far we have advanced beyond the level of morality here indicated.

Mr. Moritz found the House of Commons "rather a mean-looking building, not a little resembling a chapel. The Speaker, an elderly man with an enormous wig with two knotted kind of tresses, or curls, behind, in a black cloak, his hat on his head, sat opposite to me on a lofty chair." The Speaker of the House of Commons long ago removed his hat, which in modern Parliament-

M.P., OLDEN TIME.

ary proceedings appears only when he produces it from an unsuspected recess and uses it pointing to members when he counts the House. "The members of the House of Com-

mons," he notes, "have nothing particular in their dress. They even come into the House in their great-coats with boots and spurs," which to-day would be thought a something very particular indeed. "It is not at all uncommon to see a member lying stretched out on one of the benches whilst others are debating. Some crack nuts, others eat oranges, or whatever else is in season."

We have changed all that. During the all-night sittings in the heyday of the Land League Party an Irish member brought a paper bag of buns with him, and proceeded to refresh himself in the intervals of speech-making. This outrage on the Constitution was swiftly and sternly rebuked from the Chair, and was never repeated. Another old-world custom of the House noted by the stranger who looked down from the gallery a hundred and seventeen years ago was that members addressing their remarks to the Speaker prefaced them, as they do at this day, with the observation "Sir." "The Speaker on being thus addressed generally moves his hat a little, but immediately puts it on again." The Speaker not now wearing a hat cannot observe this courteous custom. But it exists to this day among members generally. A member referred to by another in the course of his speech always lifts his hat, in recognition of the attention, complimentary or otherwise.

In the House of Lords, more conservative of old customs than the Commons, the Lord Chancellor is upon certain occasions seen of men with a three-cornered hat crowning his full-bottomed wig. This happens when new peers take the oath and their seat. As the new peer is conducted on his quaint peregrination and salutes the Lord Chancellor from the Barons' or Earls' bench, to which he has been inducted, the Lord Chancellor responds by thrice gravely uplifting his three-cornered hat. Another time when he wears his hat in the House is when acting with other Royal Commissioners at the opening of Parliament, at its Prorogation, or at the giving the Royal Assent to Bills.

The Prussian chanced to visit the House on the historic occasion when proposal was made for doing honour to

Admiral Rodney, the gallant victor at Cape St. Vincent. "Fox," Mr. Moritz reports, "was sitting to the right of the Speaker, not far from the table on which the gilt sceptre lay. He now took his place so near it that he could reach it with his hand, and, thus placed, he gave it many a violent and hearty thump, either to aid or to show the energy with which he spoke. It is impossible for me to describe with what fire and persuasive eloquence he spoke, and how the Speaker in the Chair incessantly nodded approbation from beneath his solemn wig. Innumerable voices incessantly called out, 'Hear him! hear him!' and when there was the least sign that he intended to leave off speaking they no less vociferously exclaimed, 'Go on.' And so he continued to speak in this manner for nearly two hours."

CHARLES JAMES FOX.
(From an Old Portrait.)

"Charles Fox," writes this precursor of picturesque description of Parliamentary proceedings, "is a short, fat, and gross man, with a swarthy complexion, and dark; and in general he is badly dressed. There certainly is something Jewish in his looks. But upon the whole he is not an ill-made, nor an ill-looking, man, and there are strong marks of sagacity and fire in his eyes. Burke is a well-made, tall, upright man, but looks elderly and broken. Rigby is excessively corpulent, and has a jolly, rubicund face."

Mr. Moritz makes the interesting note that when the division on the Rodney vote was pending, members, turning their faces towards the gallery, called aloud, "Withdraw! Withdraw!" "On this," he writes, "the strangers withdraw, and are shut up

"Strangers
will with-
draw."

in a small room at the foot of the stairs till the voting is over, when they are again permitted to take their places in the gallery."

In our time, strangers in the gallery, despite the Speaker's order to withdraw, retain their seats. Only those who, with pride of port, have been conducted to the special seats under the gallery are marched out, conducted across the lobby, and left outside the locked doors till the division is over. According to Mr. Moritz's testimony, the Strangers' Galleries were not exclusively allotted to men, ladies mingling in the closely-packed company. The old House of Commons had no Ladies' Gallery.

There was, of course, no such thing as a Press Gallery in the days before the earlier Revolution in France. "Two Reporters in the House. shorthand writers," says the stranger in the gallery, whose quick glance nothing escapes, "have sat sometimes not far distant from me, who, though it is rather by stealth, endeavour to take down the words of the speaker. Thus all that is very remarkable in what is said in

Parliament may generally be read in print the next day."

Dr. Johnson often sat in this gallery, though he did not use shorthand in reporting the speeches. The omission would doubtless be to the advantage of some speakers. Mr. Moritz heard that those in constant attendance with the object of reporting the debates paid the door-keeper a guinea for the privilege of the Session. The fee was paid in advance.

DR. JOHNSON WATCHING PARLIAMENT.

There was no Strangers' Gallery in the House of Peers at that time, but the irresistible Prussian gained admission. He writes: "There appears to be much more politeness and more courteous behaviour with the members of the

Upper House. But he who wishes to observe mankind and to contemplate the leading traits of the different characters most strongly marked, will do well to attend frequently the lower rather than the upper House." Those familiar with both Houses of Parliament will know how admirably this shrewd advice pertains to the present day.

The Session is already three weeks old, but the lobby has not yet lost a certain sense of desolateness since Baron

Baron Ferdy Rothschild¹
"Ferdy." comes not any more.

He was not, in the ordinary sense of the term, a Parliamentary figure. I have no recollection of hearing him make a speech. He was not given to sitting up late at night in order to save the State or (the same thing) serve his party. But he was a man of wide human sympathies, and the House of Commons, microcosm of humanity, irresistibly attracted him.

His habit of an afternoon was to enter the lobby, generally after questions were over. With one hand in his pocket, and a smile on his face, he made straightway for a friend, standing in an accustomed spot by the doorkeeper's chair, and "wanted to know"

BARON "FERDY."

everything that had happened since the House met, and what was going on next. Baron Ferdy, otherwise a distinct individuality in his notable family, had, in marked degree, their characteristic of acquiring information. He always "wanted to know." This habitude was indicative of the universality of his sympathy. He was one of the most

¹ Baron Ferdinand Rothschild, died 1898.

unaffectedly kind-hearted men I ever knew. Looking in upon him one morning in his study at Waddesdon, I found him seated before two heaps of opened letters, one very much smaller than the other. "All begging letters," he said, glancing, with a faint smile, towards the larger bundle.

Undeterred by their predominance and persistency, Baron Ferdy had, in accordance with his custom, spent an early hour of the morning in going through them himself, fearful lest he might miss a genuine case of distress that he could alleviate.

It was not money only he bestowed. Out of its abundance a cheque more or less was nothing. More self-sacrificing, **His Ways of Charity.** he gave time and personal attention, not shrinking from putting himself under a personal obligation in order to assist some one who really had no claim upon him. The longest letter I ever had from him begged me to obtain an appointment on the London Press for a country journalist. He followed it up with renewed personal applications, impatiently treating my plea that, there being no vacancy within my knowledge, it would not be possible violently to supersede any one of the leading contributors to London journals in order to make room for his *protégé*. Judging from the ardour of the pursuit, I concluded the gentleman in question must in some way be closely connected with the Baron or his establishment. On inquiry I found he had never seen him—knew nothing about him save particulars set forth in a letter the youth had written to him. It was the old story of unrest and yearning ambition, familiar to all of us who have served on the treadmill of the Press. It was new to Baron Ferdy. It touched his kind heart, and he espoused the youth's cause with fervour that could not have been excelled had he been a kinsman.

Another of his quiet kindnesses, of which I had personal knowledge, befell on the day of the wedding of the Duchess of York. He had invited a few friends to view **"A Cup of Water."** the scene from the balcony of his mansion in Piccadilly. The crowd at this favoured spot, commanding the *débouchement* from Constitution Hill, was enormous,

The day was intensely hot, men and women fainting in the crowd, gasping for water. Baron Ferdy, observing this from the balcony, ran downstairs, ordered the servants to bring buckets of fresh water into the barricaded space before the house, and stationed two of them in a position overlooking the barricade, whence they could hand down tumblers of water to the thirsty and grateful crowd.

Last year but one, on the occasion of the Queen's Golden Jubilee, Baron Ferdy, never neglectful of opportunity to do a kindness, made, in advance, preparations for relieving the discomfort of the crowd at his gates. Finding in the course of the day that the police on duty had had nothing to eat since they turned out in the morning, he, as soon as the business of the day was over, sent out into the highways and byways, and compelled the not unwilling police to come in and partake of the remains of the sumptuous banquet he had prepared by way of luncheon for his personal friends, watching the scene from the balcony.

These are but trifling things. I tell them as happening to have come under my personal observation. They are indicative of the sweetness of Baron Ferdy's nature, the boundless charity of his disposition. The catalogue would be indefinitely extended if every one who knew him were to contribute his item. The House of Commons could better have spared a more prominent politician, a more frequent contributor to its daily debates.

It would be interesting to know whether, in all respects, Scotland stands where it did since the salary of its Heritable Usher is no longer carried on the books of the Consolidated Fund. What were precisely the duties of the Heritable Usher is not known.

**The Heritable
Usher of
Scotland.**

Long ago the inheritor did his last ushering, his heirs selling for a considerable mess of pottage the salary pertaining to the office. It was created in the year 1393, and by solemn Act of the Parliament of Scotland was conferred upon Alexander Cockburn, of Langton, and his heirs. Subsequent Acts of the Scottish Parliament, passed in 1681 and 1686, confirmed

the original grant, the latter Act attaching a salary of £250 a year to the office. When the Union of England and Scotland was effected the Heritable Usher, with many similar useful persons, was established in possession of his dignity and emoluments by a special clause in the Treaty of Union providing that "all heritable offices, superiorities, etc., being reserved to the owners thereof as rights of property in the same manner as they are now enjoyed by the laws of Scotland, notwithstanding of this treaty."

At the beginning of the century the office with the salary, being a marketable commodity, was acquired by one Sir

A KEEN SCENT FOR JOBS (MR. HANBURY).

Patrick Walker, who, with nice precision, paid a sum equivalent to $31\frac{1}{4}$ years' purchase. The office and, what is much more important, the salary finally came into the possession of the Dean and Chapter of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Mary's, Edinburgh. Mr. Hanbury, who, in this capacity of Financial Secretary to the Treasury, has a keen scent for these ancient jobs, has concluded a transaction for the computation of the salary. The Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral of St. Mary's will pouch a trifle under £7000, and the Heritable Usher of Scotland will be ushered into final obscurity.

It will be a nice task for any boy home for the holidays to reckon up with compound interest what the Heritable

Usher of Scotland has cost Great Britain since he stepped on the scene in the year of Our Lord 1393.

This transaction has been conducted in pursuance of a Treasury Minute founded upon the report of a House of Commons' Committee which met twelve years ago to consider the subject of perpetual pensions. ^{Flodden Field.}

They recommend that holders of pension allowances or payments which the Law Officers of the Crown consider to be permanent in character, but to which no obligation of an onerous kind attaches, should be invited to commute.

CHAPTER XX

APRIL

THERE is a general impression that Lord Rosebery's accession to the Premiership in 1894 was directly and

absolutely
due to Mr. ^{A Surprise.}

Gladstone's nomination. The fact is the appointment was made on the personal initiative of the Queen. The selection of the Prime Minister remains, even in these democratic days, the absolute prerogative of the Sovereign. But the prerogative is not now enforced in antagonism to the obvious drift of popular feeling.

LORD ALTHORP (AFTER H.K.B.).

The last time it was exercised in anything approaching autocratic manner happened sixty-five years ago, when William IV. was King. When Lord Althorp (of whom we had in the

House of Commons a singularly close replica in the person of Lord Hartington) went to the House of Lords it became necessary to appoint a successor to the leadership in the House of Commons. Lord John Russell seemed inevitable. But it was known that the King did not like him, distrusting the Radical element he represented. Lord Melbourne, at the time Premier, cheerily undertook to put the matter through. He drove down to

WILLIAM IV. (AFTER H.K.B.).

Brighton, where the King was staying, suggested the appointment, and was dumfounded by the reply. The King commanded him to give up the seals of office, and entrusted to his care, on the return journey to London, a letter commanding the Duke of Wellington to form a Ministry.

In the second year of Queen Victoria's reign a procedure only less arbitrary took place in connection with the Premiership. Lord Melbourne, defeated on the Jamaica Bill, resigned. The Queen, like her uncle, turned to the Duke of Wellington, who recommended Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert insisted as a condition of his undertaking the Government that the Whig Ladies-in-Waiting, who surrounded the Queen, should be dismissed. Her Majesty resented this dictation, with the result that Lord Melbourne came back with foredoomed endeavour to carry on an impossible Government.

The
Bedchamber
Women.

On the eve of the twentieth century neither King nor Queen would think of pitting preference for Bedchamber

In 1880. Women against the claims to the Premiership of a popular statesman. That the tendency to enforce the prerogative in spite of popular feeling is nevertheless ineradicable in the Royal breast was testified so recently as 1880. The General Election had been won for the Liberals by the magic of one name, the tireless energy, the boundless genius of one man. Lord Beaconsfield overthrown, Mr. Gladstone was inevitable. But the Queen did not disguise her hankering after another. She sent for Lord Hartington, and invited him to form a Ministry. He pointed out the impossibility of ignoring Mr. Gladstone's claims, but, loyally yielding to pressure, went back to town and spent a day in endeavour to meet the Queen's wishes. The result was to confirm him in his earliest conviction.

Even then Her Majesty, with womanly persistence, fought against the inevitable. Lord Granville was sent for, and the command to form a Ministry transferred to him. He, like Lord Hartington, pleading the hopelessness of such endeavour, Mr. Gladstone was reluctantly summoned, and an interval that had filled the political world with marvel and disquiet happily closed.

Fourteen years later Her Majesty was more fortunate in finding her preference for Lord Rosebery coincide not only with popular opinion, but with the personal predilections of the retiring Minister. A year or two before he withdrew from the Parliamentary stage, Mr. Gladstone publicly nominated Lord Rosebery as his successor. To that circumstance is attributable the impression, which still obtains, that it was Mr. Gladstone who selected Lord Rosebery. It was well known in the Cabinet of 1894 that what proved to be a crown of thorns was placed on Lord Rosebery's head by the Queen's own hands.

Another arrangement privately talked of at the time, had it been regarded favourably by Her Majesty, would have pleasantly varied subsequent events as regarded from the point of view of the interests of the Liberal Party. It

proposed Lord Spencer as Premier, Lord Rosebery as Foreign Secretary, Sir William Harcourt as Home Secretary and Leader of the Commons. In such case we should not have had the Death Duties Budget. But the circumambient atmosphere in Downing Street would have been more placid, and the example of discord in high places would not have spread through humbler party tracts.

Talking of the troublous times between 1892 and 1895, a member who sat through both Mr. Gladstone's and Lord Rosebery's Cabinets is of opinion that two **Moments for Resignation.** opportunities were lost for the sorely beset Liberal Government to retrieve its position by a General Election. Sustained by the advantage of reviewing the situation with full knowledge of subsequent events, this high authority insists that Mr. Gladstone should have straightway gone to the country when the Lords threw out the Home Rule Bill. For him later to descend to the level of the Parish Councils Bill was to fritter away a great opportunity; whilst keeping members with their nose to the grindstone up to Christmas Eve, with prospect of resumption of the sittings in January, was a waste of priceless energy and endurance that would have been much better directed on the field of battle at the polls.

Mr. Gladstone was personally in favour of immediate resignation, counting upon the resentment created in the popular mind by the action of the Lords. It will be remembered with what persistence he, in the last speech delivered in the House of Commons, piled up the account against the Lords in the long Session then drawing to its close. He was outvoted by colleagues in the Cabinet, who did not think that even the joy of battering the doors of the House of Lords would counteract the apathy, verging on distaste, possessing the mind of the British elector in view of the Home Rule question.

The other fortunate moment for resignation that promised to present itself during Lord Rosebery's Premiership flashed on the question of the Indian Cotton Duties. When Sir Henry James, backed by the full strength of the Unionist

party temporarily recruited by some Liberals representing cotton districts, brought forward his motion in ^{A Light that} ~~Failed.~~ the interests of British cotton spinners trading in India, defeat of the Government seemed inevitable. In

SIR HENRY JAMES AND THE COTTON DUTIES TRIBESMEN.

Cabinet Council Lord Rosebery was insistent that, immediately on the blow falling, Ministers should resign and an appeal be made to the country. He was confident that the answer of the electors to the commercial heresy of the Opposition would be highly satisfactory to sound Liberals.

It was Sir Henry Fowler who spoiled this promising game. He replied to Sir Henry James in a speech which completely knocked the bottom out of his case, and turned a threatened rout into a brilliant victory. Thus Lord Rosebery's Government had no luck. At a particular moment when disaster in the division lobby might have proved the herald of permanent access of strength in the

country, they found themselves flushed with victory. This

5

SIR HENRY FOWLER'S CHARGE.

was the more aggravating, as instances of a set speech in a party debate influencing votes are exceedingly rare.

Mention of the presence of ladies in the House of Commons made by the Prussian traveller in England, is the more remarkable as it is generally under-
Ladies in the House.
 stood that at the date of his visit, 1782, the presence of ladies was prohibited. Access to the House was forbidden them under circumstances interesting to consider in connection with the modern question of women's rights. On the 2nd of February 1778 the House was densely crowded in anticipation of debate on the state of the nation. It was to be raised upon a motion by Mr. Fox declaring that "no more of the Old Corps be sent out of the kingdom."

What happened is set forth in the current issue of the *London Chronicle*. "This day," it is written, "a vast multitude assembled in the lobby and environs of the House of Commons, but not being able to gain admission by either entreaty or interest, they forced their way into the gallery in spite of the doorkeepers. The House considered the intrusion in a heinous light, and a motion was directly made

for clearing the gallery. A partial clearing only took place : the gentlemen were obliged to withdraw ; the ladies, through complaisance, were suffered to remain ; but Governor Johnstone observing that if the motive for clearing the House was a supposed propriety, to keep the state of the nation concealed from our enemies, he saw no reason to indulge the ladies so far as to make them acquainted with the arcana of the State, as he did not think them more capable of keeping secrets than the men. Upon which, they were likewise ordered to leave the House. The Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Norton, and nearly sixty other ladies were obliged to obey the mandate."

Referring to Hansard of the date I find it recorded that, the scene over, Mr. Fox rose, and after an apology for the trouble he was about to give the Committee, extolled his own personal good fortune in having his audience reduced, "being persuaded he should not have answered the great expectations which had brought them there."

The learned Hatsell thus discourses on the incident :—

"When a member in his place takes notice to the Speaker of strangers being in the House or gallery, it is the Speaker's duty immediately to order the Serjeant
The Law on the Matter. to execute the orders of the House, and to clear the House of all but members, and this without permitting any debate or question to be moved upon the execution of the order. It very seldom happens that this can be done without a violent struggle from some quarter of the House, that strangers may remain. Members often move for the order to be read, endeavour to explain it, and debate upon it, and the House as often runs into great heats upon this subject ; but in a short time the confusion subsides, and the dispute ends by clearing the House, for if any one member insists upon it, the Speaker must enforce the order, and the House must be cleared."

"The most remarkable instance of this that has occurred in my memory," Hatsell writes, "was at a time when the whole gallery and the seats under the front gallery were filled with ladies. Captain Johnstone, of the Navy (com-

monly called Governor Johnstone), being angry that the House was cleared of all the 'men strangers,' amongst whom were some friends he had introduced, insisted that 'all strangers' should withdraw. This produced a violent ferment for a long time, the ladies showing great reluctance to comply with the order of the House, so that by their perseverance business was interrupted for nearly two hours. But at length they were compelled to submit. Since that time ladies, many of the highest rank, have made several powerful efforts to be again admitted. But Mr. Cornwall and Mr. Addington have as constantly declined to permit them to come in. Indeed, were this privilege allowed to any one individual, however high her rank, or respectable her character and manners, the galleries must soon be open to all women, who from curiosity, amusement, or any other motive, wish to hear the debates. And this to the exclusion of many young men, and of merchants and others, whose commercial interests render their attendance necessary to them, and of real use and importance to the public."

The earliest reference to the presence of ladies in the House of Commons is to be found in Grey's *Debates*: "During a debate on the 1st of June 1675," says this precursor of Hansard, "some ladies were in the gallery, peeping over the gentlemen's shoulders. The Speaker spying them, called out, 'What borough do those ladies serve for?' to which Mr. William Coventry replied, 'They serve for the Speaker's Chamber!' Sir Thomas Littleton said, 'The Speaker might mistake them for gentlemen with fine sleeves, dressed like ladies.' Says the Speaker, 'I am sure I saw petticoats.'"

Sir John Hay, whose handsome presence long decorated the bench behind the Conservative leaders, used to tell a charming story about ladies in the House. Debate coming on on the still perennial subject of the Deceased Wife's Sister, Mr. Henley, thinking the question was not one to be discussed with fullest freedom in presence of ladies, induced the Speaker to order the Serjeant-

at-Arms to have the gallery cleared. This was done with one exception. A strong-minded female announced her readiness to sit it out, however disquieting the ordeal might be.

Mr. Henley, looking up to see if the Speaker's order had been obeyed, caught a glimpse of an angular and bonneted visage peering through the bars. He called the Speaker's attention to the defiance of his rule, and a messenger was despatched with peremptory repetition of the order. The lady declined to move, threatening to scream if she were touched. This difficulty being communicated to Mr. Denison, then Speaker, he beckoned Sir John Hay to the Chair.

THE DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

"Tell Henley," he said, "I have twice sent the Serjeant-at-Arms up to clear the gallery. He reports all gone but one, and she won't budge. I believe her to be the deceased wife's sister. Better take no notice and go on with the debate."

At the time of his death Mr. Christopher Sykes was not a member of the House of Commons. But he lived there through many Sessions, and has left behind him deathless memories. Few men equally silent gave the House larger measure of delight. To behold him was a liberal education in deportment. Perhaps no one could be so proper or so wise as he habitually looked. But it is something for mortals to have at hand a model, even if it be unattainably high.

One night in the Session of 1884 Mr. Christopher Sykes startled the House by bringing in a Bill. If any member

boldly imaginative had in advance associated the Yorkshire magnate with such an undertaking, he would instinctively have conjured up a question of enormous gravity—say the repeal of the Union, or the re-establishment of the Heptarchy. When it was discovered that Mr. Sykes's bantling was a Bill to amend the Fisheries (Oysters, Crabs, and Lobsters) Act, 1877, the House shook with Homeric laughter.

Circumstances were favourable to the high comedy that followed. Ordinary members bring in Bills in the prosaic

Christopher's opening hour of a sitting.

Manœuvres.

Mr. Sykes selected the alternative opportunity presented at its close. At that hour the House is always ready for a lark. The discovery of Mr. Sykes standing behind the empty Front Opposition Bench, grave, white-waistcoated, wearing in the buttonhole of his dinner-coat the white flower of a blameless life, promised sport. He held a paper in his hand but said never a word, staring blankly at the Speaker, who was also on his legs, running through the Orders of the Day. For a member to remain on his feet whilst the Speaker is upstanding is a breach of order of which Mr. Sykes was riotously reminded. For all answer, he looked around with the air of a stolid man surveying, without understanding, the capering of a cage of monkeys.

"THE AIR OF A STOLID MAN
SURVEYING THE CAPERING
OF A CAGE OF MONKEYS."

The Speaker, charitably concluding that the hon. member was moving for leave to bring in the Bill, put the question. Sir Wilfrid Lawson observed that the Bill was evidently one of great importance. It was usual in such circumstances for the member in charge to explain its scope. Would Mr. Sykes favour the House with a few observations?

Mr. Sykes took no notice of this appeal or of the uproarious applause with which it was sustained. Leave being given to bring in the Bill, Christopher, who had evidently carefully rehearsed the procedure, rose and with long stride made his way to the Bar. Members in charge of Bills, having obtained leave to introduce them, stand at the Bar till, the list completed, the Speaker calls upon them by name to bring up their Bill, which they hand to the Clerk at the table. To the consternation of the Speaker and the uncontrollable amusement of the House, Mr. Sykes, having reached the Bar, straightway turned about, walked up the floor, Bill in hand, and stood at the table solemnly gazing on the Speaker. As nothing seemed to come of this, he, after a while, retired a few paces, bowed to the Mace, again advanced, halted at the foot of the table, and again stared at the Speaker. The Solicitor-General and another Minister who happened to be on the Treasury Bench took him by each arm, gently but firmly leading him back to the Bar, standing sentry beside him in preparation for any further unauthorised movement.

Other business disposed of, the Speaker called him by name. Mr. Sykes, whose unruffled visage and attitude of funereal gravity were in striking contrast with the uproarious merriment that prevailed on both sides, again advanced, handed the Bill to the waiting Clerk, and forthwith departed. This was a fresh and final breach of Parliamentary rules. It is ordered that a member, having brought in a Bill, shall stand at the table whilst the Clerk reads out its title. In reply to a question from the Speaker he names a day for the second reading. Swift messengers caught Mr. Sykes as he was crossing the Bar and haled him back to the table, where at last, preserving amid shouts of laughter his impregnable air of gravity, he completed his work.

But he never brought in another Bill, and, though he did not immediately retire from Parliamentary life, he withdrew more closely in his shell, even as the perturbed periwinkle or the alarmed cockle shrink from the rude advance of man.

In some particulars Johnston of Ballykilbeg fails to realise the popular idea of an Irish member. He is certainly not boisterous in his humour, and never emulates ^{Johnston of} Sir Boyle Roche. Yet humour he has, rather of ^{Ballykilbeg.} dour, Covenanting style, highly successful in tickling the fancy of the House. The highest tribute to his excellent qualities of heart and mind is found in the fact that though a typical Orangeman, on whom glimpse of the flutter of the skirt of the Scarlet Lady has the same effect as the waving of a red rag on an infuriate bull, he is on friendliest terms with his Catholic compatriots. To the delight of the House, they fence with each other at question-time, Ballykilbeg by no means coming off worst in the encounter of wit.

There is one important particular in which Mr. Johnston can claim common ground with Irish members in the opposite camp. He has been in prison. The event happened long ago, and Mr. Johnston being then of only local fame did not loom large in the

MR. JOHNSTON IN PRISON.

newspapers. Consequently it passed from recollection, the House being startled when, one night last Session, in Committee on the Irish Local Government Bill, Mr. Dillon, whose memory for such matters is fresher, made passing allusion to it.

It was one of the incidents consequent on the glorious celebration in the year 1867 of the Twelfth of July in

County Down. There was at that time in existence a statute known as the Party Processions Act, which prohibited street demonstrations in Ireland. Mr. Johnston thought he

observed that whilst the Act was negligently administered when there was question of Catholic or Nationalist street processions, no two or three Orangemen wearing harmless ribbons, beating the peaceful drum, and roaring "To — with the Pope!" might parade the streets

BEATING THE ORANGE DRUM.

of Belfast without straightway being haled to prison. He resolved to offer himself as a martyr to the cause of truth. Accordingly, on this 12th of July, now more than twenty-one years past, he arrayed himself in full fig, and placed himself at the head of an Orange procession. He was arrested, and committed for trial. Brought before the genial judge, now (through the London season) an exile from his country under the style of Lord Morris, he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

It was intimated to him that, if he pleased, he might go forth from prison on his own recognisances. As that involved a pledge "not to do it any more," he stoutly declined. He served his two months, and found in the discipline the making of his political fortunes. In 1868 came the General Election, pregnant with Mr. Gladstone's great boons for Ireland. The men of Belfast returned Mr. Johnston of Ballykilbeg at the head of the poll, and have since remained faithful to him.

CHAPTER XXI

MAY

A PLEASING hope that last Session fluttered the breast of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was doomed to disappointment.

A dead Hope.

When discovery was made that Mr. Villiers, who for years had been in receipt of a Cabinet pension of £2000 a year, died worth £354,687 : 15 : 9, it was assumed that the executors would make haste to repay with compound interest the aggregate of the pension drawn. There had evidently been a mistake somewhere. The pension of ex-Cabinet Ministers is a plan devised towards the middle of the century with the commendable object of preventing statesmen out of office from suffering in their personal estate. Proportionately the emoluments of Ministers who serve the British Crown are pitiful. Mr. Gladstone, who for more than sixty years

"A PENSIONER."

devoted his time to the service of the country, died leaving a personal fortune amounting to about one-seventh of that bequeathed by Mr. Villiers. Mr. Gladstone never drew the pension of an ex-Cabinet Minister, taking his salary only when in office. At one time he even saved the Exchequer the annual amount of a first-class Ministerial salary by combining the work of two offices for the remuneration of one.

Mr. Gladstone inherited a modest personal fortune, and never had occasion to make the indispensable declaration "Grand Cross," that accompanies application for Cabinet pension —that its allotment is necessary in order that the suppliant may maintain the position of an ex-Minister of the Crown. Mr. Disraeli was in other circumstances, and, very properly, availed himself of the privilege of a pension the country cheerfully paid.

Another man of genius whose case the Cabinet pension fund fortuitously fits is Lord Cross. There is a general impression that he is a man of supreme business capacity, whose knowledge of financial affairs in connection with the investment of private property is justly valued in the highest quarter. There is even a dim notion that he is beneficially connected with a flourishing banking institution. This, like much other talk about public men, must be a popular delusion. Lord Cross is a patriot statesman who, having for a brief time enjoyed in succession the emoluments of Home Secretary and Secretary of State for India, has for many years regularly drawn his £2000, paid quarterly from the pension list.

When Mr. Villiers began to draw his pension he, like Lord Cross, must needs have made the statutory declaration

A Mistake that the money was necessary to enable him to
Somewhere. maintain a position compatible with his former Ministerial office. That the solemn declaration agreed with his circumstances at the time is beyond the shadow of a doubt. Obviously they must have changed at some later period, or the pensioner would not have been in a position to bequeath to his nephews something over a third of a million

sterling. Mr. Arthur Balfour, approached last Session on the subject, privately intimated to the member who placed the question on the paper that, in his opinion, the published statement of Mr. Villiers's personalty did not affect the question of the pension. He had, Mr. Balfour said, been enriched by the bequeathal of the fortune of a lady, but had resolutely declined to benefit by the bequest, now transferred to his heirs.

There is evidently a serious misunderstanding here, either on Mr. Balfour's part or on that of the member with whom he communicated. The lady in question was Miss Mellish, who died at her residence in Great Stanhope Street on the 17th of February 1880. She left personal estate sworn under £120,000 value. This she bequeathed in trust to pay the income to Mr. Villiers during his life, it passing absolutely on Mr. Villiers's death to another gentleman, named co-executor with him. These yearly payments, accruing only since 1880, would not amount to anything like £354,687, not to mention the fifteen and ninepence.

I understand that during the present Session an attempt will be made to enforce a regulation preventing recurrence of this scandal. Some years ago an ex-Liberal Minister,¹ who at a particular date found himself ^{A parallel Case.} in a position to make the statutory declaration which is an essential preliminary to receiving such pension, came into a fortune. Whilst in his mind was crystallising the simply honest intention of writing to the Treasury to inform them of his good fortune, and begging that his name might be removed from the pension list, hon. gentlemen seated opposite in the House of Commons, zealous for public economy, began to move in the matter. Questions were with relentless pertinacity addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was speedily able to announce that the pension was stopped.

What is needed is a further regulation that once a year, or at least triennially, recipients of these pensions shall be required to renew their declaration as to the condition of

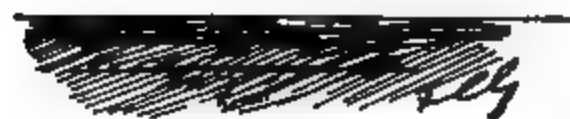
¹ Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

their private resources. Mr. Villiers had been for so long in receipt of a pension granted in recognition of a few years' service at the Poor Law Board, that he came to regard it as a matter of course, forgetting the definite condition upon which it had been allotted. Had he been reminded by some such communication as is here suggested, he would have awakened to a true sense of the situation, and as an honourable man would forthwith have relinquished the pension, possibly even have repaid what he had inadvertently overdrawn.

When the late Lord Barrington, seventh in succession to the Irish Viscountcy, was made a peer of the United Kingdom, people asked why. He had long sat as member for that intelligent constituency of Eye, immediately afterwards connected with quite another order of statesman (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett). He never, as far as I remember, took part in debate, and such services as he rendered to the State appeared to be adequately rewarded by his appointment as Vice-Chamberlain of the Queen's household. Nevertheless, Lord Beaconsfield, finding his Government crushed by the General Election of 1880, made haste, before it fell, to make Lord Barrington an English peer.

Members of the House of Commons, ransacking their memories for suggestion of reason, recalled how one night,

whilst Dizzy was still with us in the Commons, he, awakening from profound reverie, could not find his eye-glass. He wanted to stick it in his right eye and take his accustomed survey of the House. With a haste and perturbation foreign to his impassive manner, he rooted about in the



"THE LOST EYE-GLASS."

recesses of his waistcoat, tugged at his shirt-collar, peered on the ground at his feet, had given it up for a bad job, when

Lord Barrington, who was sitting near him, quietly put his hand between the Premier's shoulders and brought round the errant glass.

Dizzy, though not demonstrative, never forgot a friend or a favour. So it came about five years later, when the reins of power were slipping out of his fingers, he held them for a moment longer to give Lord Barrington a seat in the House of Lords and a place on the roll of the English peerage. At least, that was what was said at the time in the private conversation of Lord Barrington's friends.

The late Lord Herschell¹ made his mark in the House of Commons at the very first opportunity. I have occasion

Herschell's Maiden Speech. to remember it, for the member for the City of Durham, after he came to the Woolsack, more than once alluded in terms of quite undeserved kindness to an episode connected with the event. When Herschell came into Parliament he was quite unknown outside Bar and Circuit circles. Over a space of a quarter of a century I well remember how one night there rose from the third bench above the gangway, on the Opposition side, a dark-visaged, self-possessed, deliberately spoken young man, who, making his maiden speech, addressed the House as if he had been born and nurtured on the premises. The topic was the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, the audience small, and not demonstratively appreciative. I was much struck with the new-comer's capacity and promise, and noted them (I think) in the articles "Under the Clock" then commencing in *The World*.

LORD HERSCHELL—A
SKETCH IN THE LOBBY.

In later years praise and appreciation came full-handed

¹ Died 1899.

to the Solicitor-General, the Lord Chancellor, the chosen representative of Great Britain in International conferences. Lord Herschell, not given to gushing, more than once said that appreciation coming at that particular time was more useful in its encouragement, more gratefully remembered, than was the din of applause that greeted and sustained his prime.

Herschell did admirably in the House of Commons, steadily working his way through it to the Woolsack. But

he was at his
best in the ^{In the Lords.}

House of Lords. The place, its surroundings, and its associations were more in unison with his unemotionable, somewhat cold, stately nature and manner. He had not the light touch that delights a jaded House of Commons. He always spoke as if he were seated, wigged and gowned, on the Bench, never varying from judicial manner. In the Lords, whilst the same style was prevalent, there was

LORD HERSCHELL AS LORD CHANCELLOR.

something in the prevailing atmosphere, and in the relative position of the party to which he belonged and the overwhelming numbers opposed to it, that stirred the depths of his nature. When he stepped aside from the Woolsack to take part in debate, he spoke with an animation of voice and gesture quite unfamiliar with him in the Commons. Perhaps the associations of the wig and gown with their memories of assize conflict had something to do with the increased animation. However that be, it was strongly marked, and added considerably to the effect of his speech.

As years advanced and honours increased, Herschell's conscientiousness, his shrinking from any step that savoured

of a job, grew in predominance. He raised quite a storm by his disinclination to make use of the magisterial Bench as a means of distributing rewards A Passover. among good Liberals. The same extreme, perhaps morbid, delicacy ruled his conduct in the appointment of judges. There was a time during his Lord Chancellorship when the long-overlooked claim of Mr. Arthur Cohen to a judgeship seemed certain of recognition. Everybody said Cohen would be the new judge. Lord Herschell did not question his capacity or suitability. But Mr. Cohen had sat in the House of Commons for Southwark, and had taken active part in furthering the cause of the Liberal party. Herschell felt conscious of a disposition to recognise party services of that character and lived them down. Some one else who had done nothing for the Liberal party got the judgeship.

"Cohen at least oughtn't to be surprised," said one of the wittiest judges still in ermine.¹ "He would know that he could not expect anything from a Jew but a passover."

I once asked the late Sir William Adam, the popular and able Liberal Whip of the 1874 Parliament, why Whips stand or walk about the lobby without their Whips and Hats. hats on. "I don't know," he answered, with Scottish caution, "unless it be to keep their heads cool. That, you know, is a necessary condition of success in our line of business."

That a Whip should never wear his hat whilst the House is in Session is one of the quaint unwritten laws of Parliament. Its origin, like the birth of Jeames, is "wropt in myst'ry." It probably arose in the case of some hot-blooded, bustling Whip, who found head-gear heating. However it be, the custom has reached the status of an immutable law. It would not be more surprising to see the Speaker sitting bare-headed in the Chair when the Mace is on the table than to find the chief Whips, or any one of their colleagues, going about his business in the lobby with hat on.

¹ Lord Justice Mathew.

So intimate is the association of ideas, that when one day last Session Lord Stalbridge looked in and stood for a while by the door of the lobby with his hat on, old members gasped. It is many years since Lord Stalbridge, then Lord Richard Grosvenor, acted as Whip. So abiding are old associations that it was not without a shock he, after long interval, was observed wearing his hat in his old place on guard by the door, where he had instinctively planted himself.

The fascination which pertains to the office of Whip is incomprehensible to some minds. It is, at best, a thank-

The Camel of the House of Commons.

ON GUARD—SIR WILLIAM WALROND,
CHIEF CONSERVATIVE WHIP.

less post. If things go right in the division lobby the result is accepted as a matter of course. If they go wrong, woe to the Whip. He is the camel of the House of Commons, doing all the drudgery, taking none of the honour. Moreover, he is not allowed to share the privilege of the camel, whose haughty "don't-know-you" air as it regards mankind must be some recompense for all the toil and indignity it suffers. A Whip, on the contrary, must always be in beaming good-humour. Like Cæsar's wife (according to the version of the Yorkshire mayor), he must be all things to all men.

There was in an elder Parliament a well-known exception to the rule that enforces equanimity of temper on the Whip.

Lord —, Many members of the present House retain memories of a noble lord, now gathered to his fathers, who was a terror to evil-doers. It was the epoch

of all-night sittings, when fathers of families had a yearning desire to go home not later than one o'clock in the morning. Seated on the bench by the lobby door the Whip, who had been up all the previous night, might be forgiven if he dropped asleep. But he slept with one eye and one ear open. The anxious parent, closely watching him and timidly making for the door, never did more than touch its framework before a hand was on his shoulder, and there rattled in his ear observations which seemed quotations from the conversation of our army when in Flanders.

That was an exceptional personal idiosyncrasy, and the energetic remonstrator was not the Chief Whip. He was useful in his way. But his particular method of address had no precedent and has not been imitated.

THE LATE MR. T. E. ELLIS—CHIEF
LIBERAL WHIP.

The attraction of the Whips' office is certainly not based on pecuniary considerations. The Patronage Secretary has a salary of £2000 a year, his colleagues, who rank as Junior Lords of the Treasury, receiving half that sum. When their party is out of office, the Whips, with very nearly as much work to do, draw no pay. It is true that the Whips' room is the rarely failing avenue to higher Ministerial office. In two recent cases, that of Mr. Brand and Mr. Peel, it led to the Speaker's Chair and a peerage. Mr. Arnold Morley was made Postmaster-General; Sir William Dyke became Vice-President of the Council; his colleague, Mr. Rowland Winn, being made a peer. The present First Commissioner of Works

The Prizes of
the Whips'
Room.

was long time Conservative Whip. The late Colonel Taylour was made Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The long services of Sir William Adam received niggardly reward by appointment to the Governorship of Madras.

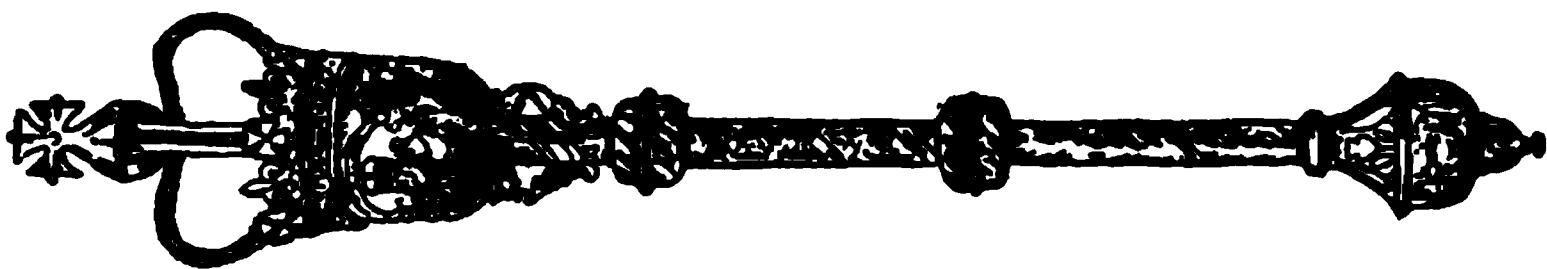
In former times the Chief Government Whip, who still retains the style of Patronage Secretary, had a multitude of good things to give away. Beginning his career fifty years ago, and not having his steps directed towards the Woolsack, the Patronage Secretaryship would have just suited Lord Halsbury. Now the Patronage Secretaryship is, like friendship, "but a name." The Chief Whip has nothing in his wallet for hungry dependants, or for influential constituents—not even a tide-waitership or a country postmastership. Nevertheless the post of Whip continues to wield potent fascination for young, active, and ambitious members of the House. It is a life of constant, in the main, obscure drudgery.

The great gilt instrument that rests upon the table of the House of Commons, when the Speaker is in the Chair, is the third of its race. The first that lives in history has no birth-date. But its disappearance is authoritatively recorded. On or about the very day when Charles I. lost his head on the scaffold, the Mace of the House of Commons disappeared. Probably some stern Roundhead, his Puritanic gorge rising at spectacle of a symbol, put the Mace in the melting-pot and the proceeds of the transaction in his pocket. However it be, the first Mace was seen in its resting-place on such and such a day, and, like ships posted up at Lloyd's, has not since been heard of.

When Cromwell came into power, and Parliamentary proceedings were resumed, he ordered another Mace to be made. This lives in history as the bauble which, later, Cromwell himself ordered to be taken away. His command was literally obeyed. The second Mace was so effectually removed that, like the first, it was never more seen or heard of.

The Mace which now glistens on the table of the House of Commons, and is carried before the Speaker when he visits the House of Lords, is of considerable antiquity. It was made in 1660, on the restoration of Charles II. It is watched over with infinite care, being through the Session in personal charge of the Serjeant-at-Arms. During the recess it is, as was the wont and usage of traitors in olden times, committed to the Tower, where it is guarded as not the least precious among the jewels of the Crown.

Whilst Lord Peel was yet Speaker of the House of Commons, he, from information received, was momentarily flushed with hope that Cromwell's Mace had been discovered in Jamaica. Diligent inquiry on the spot blighted this hope. It turned out that there are two Maces in the Colony, but they are comparatively



THE MACE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

modern, dating from the uninteresting Georgian period. One, like the lamp-posts in the neighbourhood of St. James's Palace, has stamped on its head the initials "G. R." There is the date-mark, 1753-4. The other is stamped with the King's head, and the date-mark 1757-8. Both are silver gilt.

The Speaker's inquiries brought to light the interesting fact that Jamaica at one time possessed a Mace presented to the Colony by Charles II. Doubtless it was ordered at the same time as the one at present in the House of Commons. It cost nearly £80, and was conveyed to Jamaica by Lord Windsor, the first Governor commissioned by Charles II. By an odd coincidence this Mace also disappeared. In 1672 Jamaica suffered one of its not infrequent earthquakes. Parliament House was amongst the many public buildings in Port Royal that were engulfed. It is believed that King Charles's Mace went down with the rest. However it be, like Cromwell's bauble, it has vanished from human ken.

Referring to a recent note about a member of the present House of Commons, originally a clergyman of the Church of England, who inadvertently united a blushing **Baptism by Immersion.** bride with the best man instead of with the bridegroom, another member writes to remind me of even a worse case of absent-mindedness. The reverend gentleman in this case was George Dyer, an intimate friend of Charles Lamb. Early in his career he did duty as a Baptist minister, his ministration being on the whole not unattended with success. One day, performing the rite of baptism by total immersion, he fell into a train of profound thought, meanwhile holding an old woman under water till she was drowned.

This led to some unpleasantness, and Mr. Dyer retired from the ministry. But he never overcame his proneness to absent-mindedness. One night, on leaving Charles Lamb's hospitable house, he walked straight ahead out of the front door plump into the New River.

Lord Rathmore has many good stories. One, not the worst, is autobiographical. Shortly after he was raised to the peerage he took a trip to the Riviera. The **The Predicament of a new Peer.** French railway company, desirous to do honour to a distinguished English *confrère*, reserved a carriage for his private use. He made the most of the opportunity, getting a good sleep shortly after leaving Paris on the journey south. At some unknown hour of the night, at some unrecognised station, the door of the carriage was suddenly opened. A lantern was flashed upon him, and a voice sharply cried, "*Votre nom ?*"

Lord Rathmore, wakened out of his sleep, looking up in a partly dazed condition, discovered a railway official on his way round for tickets. Lord Rathmore's name was on the paper affixed to the window, marking the compartment as reserved. The official, in performance of his duty, and with that passion for regularising everything which besets Frenchmen in uniform, merely desired to identify the occupant of the carriage with the person to whose use it was inscribed.

"*Votre nom ?*" he sternly repeated, seeing the passenger hesitate.

In response there sprang to Lord Rathmore's lips the familiar "David Plunket." Happily he remembered in time that he was no longer David Plunket, but for the life of him, wakened out of his sleep, and thus abruptly challenged, he

"WHAT ON EARTH IS MY NAME?"

could not remember what title in the peerage he had selected.

Here was a pickle ! Any one familiar with the arbitrary ways of the French railway official will know what would have happened supposing the passenger had confessed that he really did not know his own name. Cold sweat bedewed the forehead a coronet had not yet pressed. The new peer began to regret more bitterly than ever that he had left the House of Commons. The interval seemed half an hour. Probably it was only half a minute before recollection of his new name surged back upon him, and he hurriedly but gratefully pronounced it.

CHAPTER XXII

JUNE

THE Lobby does not yet look itself, lacking the cheery, bustling presence of poor Tom Ellis. It is a significant

peculiarity, shared with very few members, that "Tom" Ellis, the late Liberal Whip was always spoken of by the diminutive of his Christian name. Another Whip, also

like Lydias and Tom Ellis dead ere his prime, won the distinction.

Through the angriest days of Mr. Parnell's ruthless campaign against the dignity of Parliament and the stability of its ancient institutions, his cheery, warm-hearted, mirth-loving Whip was always "Dick"

Power. To-day we happily still have with us Sir Robert Threshie

TOM ELLIS.

Reid, Q.C., sometime Solicitor-

General, later Attorney-General, in the House of Commons always "Bob" Reid. These two instances show the kind of man the House delights to honour by this rare mark of friendly feeling.

It was a bold stroke on the part of Lord Rosebery, at the time Prime Minister, to promote the member for Merionethshire to the post of Chief Ministerial Whip on the submergence of Mr. Marjoribanks in the House of Lords.

With Liberals only less exclusively than with the Conservative party, it has, from time immemorial, been the custom to appoint as Chief Whip a scion of the peerage, or a commoner sanctified by connection with an old county family. Tom Ellis had neither call to the high position. His father was a tenant farmer. He himself was a Welsh member, having neither social standing nor pecuniary resources. To make such a man what is still known by the ancient style of Patronage Secretary was a bold experiment. That even at the outset it was not resented by the party is a striking tribute to Tom Ellis's character.

It would not be true to say that, in private conversation, heads were not shaken, and that tongues did not wag apprehension that the thing would never do. The new Whip speedily lived down these not unnatural and scarcely ill-natured doubts. He had a sweet serenity of temper impervious to pin-pricks, a sunny nature before which spite thawed. It was an immense lift for a young, obscure Welsh member at a bound to be made the confidant of Cabinet Ministers, the trusted agent and instrument of the most powerful governing body in the world. It did not even begin to spoil him. There was no difference between Tom Ellis, member for Merionethshire, and Tom Ellis, Chief Ministerial Whip, except perhaps that the latter was more diffident in his demeanour, a shade nearer being deferential in his intercourse with fellow-members. His most marked failing was his extreme modesty—unique default in a Parliamentary Whip. It did not, however, cover weakness of will or hesitancy when he heard the call of duty. He was genuinely sorry if any particular course for the adoption or the carrying out of which he was responsible hurt anybody's feelings, or did not fully accord with one's material interests. If a thing had to be done, it was got through, smilingly, gently, but firmly.

Tom Ellis was so unassuming in manner, so persistently deprecatory of his own claims to thanks or approval, that his great capacity was often underestimated. Alike in the

House of Commons and in Parliament Street we have time now to sum it up at its real value.

The Prime Minister rarely takes notes as a preliminary to taking part in a debate. Among many instances of this habit I well remember his speech on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill in the Session of 1893. He sat out the course of long and, on the first night, dreary speaking in his familiar attitude, with

Lord
Salisbury's
Memory.

head bowed, legs crossed, the right one persistently shaken in fashion tending to drive mad neighbours of nervous habit. He did not as he listened take a single note. When at ten o'clock on the second night of the debate he stood at the table, he laid upon it a square of paper about the size of an ordinary envelope. This presumably contained the notes of his speech brought down from his study. If so,

"SITTING OUT A DEBATE."

they were almost entirely ignored. He went steadily on, his speech a stately river of perfectly-turned phrases. He omitted no point in the argument of speakers in favour of the Bill, and more than once quoted them textually.

That, a by no means infrequent occurrence, is the chiefest marvel. Debaters most chary of note-taking invariably write down the very words of an earlier speaker when they intend to cite them in support of their argument. A sentence that strikes Lord Salisbury is burnt in upon his memory.

When the proper moment comes he quotes it without lapsing into paraphrase.

A colleague of the Premier's tells me he once spoke to him admiringly of this wonderful gift. Lord Salisbury explained that he adopted the habit from necessity rather than from choice. He felt hopelessly hampered with written notes, often finding difficulty in reading them. Feeling the necessity of mastering the precise turns of particular phrases as they dropped from the lips of a debater, he gives himself up to the task, and rarely finds himself at fault.

Mr. Arthur Balfour in lesser degree shares his uncle's gift of precise memory. When, as happened this Session, he has to expound an intricate measure like the London Government Bill, he provides himself with sheafs of notes, and his speech suffers in perspicacity accordingly. That laboriously prepared effort was his one failure of the Session. As a rule he is exceedingly frugal in the matter of note-taking. More frequently than otherwise he speaks without the assistance of notes. Like Mr. Gladstone, Sir William Harcourt, and all Parliamentary debaters of the first rank, he is at his best when, suddenly called upon, he plunges into chance debate.

Sir William Harcourt is a voluminous note-taker, his big, as distinguished from his great, speeches being almost entirely read from an appalling pile of manuscript. Mr. Chamberlain rarely trusts him-

"MR. CHAMBERLAIN TAKES A NOTE."

self in the sea of debate without the bladder of notes. But they are not extended. A sheet of note-paper usually serves for their setting forth.

The new Viceroy of India¹ was more fortunate in the attitude of public opinion towards his appointment than was a predecessor nominated exactly thirty years earlier. When Mr. Disraeli made Lord Mayo Governor-General of India, the announcement was hailed with a storm of opprobrium from newspapers not marshalled solely on the Opposition side. The Viceroy-designate was chiefly known to the House of Commons and the public by a once-famous, now forgotten, speech, delivered in the spring of 1868. John Francis Maguire, forerunner of the Parnellite organisation, submitted a series of resolutions on the condition of Ireland. In the course of his speech he dwelt upon the evil effects wrought to his country by the existence of the Irish Church. That was the burning question of the hour. A month later, Mr. Gladstone's Resolution decreeing the disestablishment of the Church was carried in the teeth of the Ministry by a large majority. It was known that the pending General Election would turn upon the issue. Lord Mayo, at the time Irish Secretary, was put up to answer Mr. Maguire.

There are some (exceedingly few) members of the present House who recall the speech and the scene. For four hours the Irish Secretary floundered along. Just as he seemed to be collapsing from physical exhaustion, shared by his audience, he pulled himself together and spluttered out a sentence that instantly agitated the House. Mr. Maguire had denounced the Church Establishment as a scandalous and monstrous anomaly. The Irish Secretary, hinting at a scheme for making all religious denominations in Ireland happy without sacrificing the Established Church, talked about "levelling up, not levelling down."

The phrase was instantly recognised as coming from the mint of the Mystery Monger sitting with bowed head and folded arms on the Treasury Bench. What did it mean? Was Dizzy going to dish Gladstone by dealing with the Irish Church question before the enemy got the chance? No one off the Treasury Bench ever knew. Some day the

¹ Lord Curzon.

mystery may be unravelled. Up to this time Lord Mayo fills the position of

Him who left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold.

On the last day of July in the same year Parliament was dissolved, and within a week it was whispered that Lord Mayo was to be the new Governor-General of India. Exile seemed a just punishment for a four hours' speech murmured before a hapless House of Commons. But there was a general impression that this kind of exile was, in the circumstances, too splendid.

One of Lord Mayo's intimate friends who saw the new Viceroy off on his journey to India tells me a curious incident illustrative of the situation. Expressing hope of some time looking in to see the Viceroy at ^{"Many a Slip."} Calcutta, or Simla, Lord Mayo said: "You may see me again much sooner than that. I should not be a bit surprised if, when I get to Suez, I find a telegram recalling me."

Since his appointment, and pending his departure, Mr. Gladstone had been returned by a majority that placed him in a position of autocratic supremacy. There was, unquestionably, something out of the way in the haste with which the fallen Government had filled up the greatest prize at their disposal. There was at the time no question of the possibility of Lord Derby's Administration being reinstated. As my friend (a Conservative member of the last Parliament elected under the Reform Bill of 1832) put it, "Defeated about twice a week in the House of Commons, going to certain doom in the country, Dizzy pitchforked Mayo on to the Viceregal throne." It would have been a strong course to recall him, but the circumstances were unprecedented.

Certainly Lord Mayo did not feel safe till he had passed Suez, going forward on a journey which, three years later, the assassin's knife ended on the Andaman Islands. Meanwhile, "Dizzy's dark horse" had come in the first flight in the race for enduring fame among Indian Viceroys.

In 1816 Sir Robert Peel, then Chief Secretary, wrote :
 "I believe an honest despotic Government would be by far
 the fittest government for Ireland." Sixteen
 After many Days. years later Lord Althorp, another statesman
 not prone to form a rash opinion, wrote to Lord Grey : "If
 I had my way I would establish a dictatorship in Ireland."

The Irish members complain that what was refused to
 Peel, to Althorp, and to a long list of statesmen directly

concerned for the gov-
 ernment of Ireland
 has been granted to
 so mild a mannered
 man as Mr. Gerald
 Balfour. His appear-
 ance is certainly out
 of keeping with the
 part. But, as the Irish
 members found one
 Friday night this Ses-
 sion, when Mr. Davitt
 brought up the case
 of distress in Ireland,
 within the Chief Sec-
 retary's fragile frame,
 behind his almost
 maidenly reserve, glow

"THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S FRAGILE FRAME."

embers of a fire that can, upon occasion, be fanned into
 furious flame.

An ancient House of Commons' tradition tells how the
 Speaker of the day, having solemnly threatened a member
 that he would "name him" if he did not refrain
 Peers and Elections. from disorderly conduct, was asked what would
 follow on the proceeding. "The Lord only knows," re-
 sponded the Speaker.

Early in the present Session there came to the front two
 other examples of consecrated cryptic doom. At the open-
 ing of every Session the Speaker, amid a buzz of conversation

among reunited members, reads a series of Standing Orders. One forbids any peer of Parliament to concern himself in the election of members to the House of Commons. For generations this formula has passed unchallenged. The peers have been solemnly warned off, have received the injunction in submissive silence, and (some of them) have taken the earliest opportunity of disregarding it.

It is a frailty of the human mind that repetition blunts the power of discrimination. Hearing this Order read Session after Session, old members grow so accustomed to the rhythm of its sentences that their purport passes unheeded. Young members make no move, not because they lack presumption, but because they believe that what has been so long endured must necessarily be right.

It needed a man of the mental and physical youth of Mr. James Lowther to put his finger on this anomaly. This Session, as in one or two of its predecessors, he has moved to expunge the Standing Order from the catalogue. He has shown, and no one has disputed the fact, that in spite of its pompous assumption of authority the rule is absolutely impotent. If a peer pleases to violate the ordinance the House of Commons has absolutely no power to enforce it. With an ordinary business assembly that would suffice to make an end of the absurdity. The conservatism of the House of Commons in respect of its own procedure is deeply rooted. Mr. Lowther's motion was rejected by a considerable majority, and next Session, as through the ages, this *brutum fulmen* will be hurled from the Speaker's Chair.

"MENTAL AND
PHYSICAL YOUTH"—
MR. JAMES LOWTHER.

The analogous anomaly that cropped up in debate was the position of truant members of Select Committees. Members are nominated to the Committee on a private Bill

by a body called the Committee of Selection, over which, for just a quarter of a century, Sir John Mowbray presided. Committee-men are expected to attend the various sittings. If they do not, the Chairman reports the delinquents to the House, and a formal motion is made, that the errant member "do attend the said Committee at half-past eleven to-morrow."

Dogberry and
the House of
Commons'
Watch.

Of late Sessions the House, sensible of the false position it was placed in by this procedure, has varied it. Instead of the formal injunction that used to appear on the votes commanding the attendance of the peccant member, the report is simply ordered to lie on the table.

A very proper distinction in this matter is made between the sacred persons of members of the House and mere

citizens. It sometimes happens that a busy man summoned to give evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons fails to obey the summons.

All the
Difference.

Then doth the thunder roll and the lightning flash. The Chairman hurries off to tell the shameful story to the shocked House. A peremptory order is issued for the attendance of the recalcitrant witness, and the Serjeant-at-Arms is instructed to see that it be obeyed. A communication by post, or by messenger if the witness reside within the Metropolitan area, usually brings him up to the scratch at the appointed place and hour. If he pushes

reg

"THE SERJEANT-AT-ARMS WILL GO AND
FETCH HIM."

reg

communication by post, or by messenger if the witness reside within the Metropolitan area, usually brings him up to the scratch at the appointed place and hour. If he pushes

resistance to extreme the Serjeant-at-Arms will go and fetch him *vi et armis*. He will be brought to the Bar of the House and committed to the Clock Tower till purged of his contumacy.

In *Mr. Gregory's Letter Box*, being the correspondence of the Right Hon. Wm. Gregory from 1813 to 1835, he during the greater part of that time being Under Secretary for Ireland, there is quoted a striking sentence from Canning. "I have never," he said, "seen a demagogue who did not shrink to his proper dimensions after six months of Parliamentary life."

Demagogues
in the House:
Dr. Kenealy.

This acute observation remains as true to-day as it was in the earlier Parliaments Canning adorned and occasionally dominated. Two modern instances suffice to prove the case. When, in 1875, Dr. Kenealy entered the House, triumphantly returned by the men of Stoke, he was an undoubted power in the land. I remember Mr. Adam, then Opposition Whip, showing me an appalling list of constituencies, some held by Liberals, others by Conservatives, common in the peculiarity that if a vacancy occurred the next day Kenealy could return his nominee. He was conscious of his power, and meant to make the House of Commons feel its influence. The crowded benches that attended his utterances furnished flattering testimony to his power and the interest excited by his personality.

On the occasion of his first appearance, the House was filled as it had not been since critical divisions on the Irish Land Bill, or the Irish Church Bill, of the preceding Parliament. Amongst the spectators from the galleries over the clock were the Prince of Wales, Prince Christian, and the ex-King of Naples; at the time a visitor to London. Mr. Evelyn Ashley, at the safe distance of the Isle of Wight, had been saying something about Kenealy, who made it a question of privilege. In this speech was set that gem of oratory remembered long after the rest is forgotten.

Dewdrops on
the Lion's
Mane.

"Of one thing I am certain," said Kenealy, in deep

chest-notes, wagging his head and his fore-finger, as through many days of the Tichborne trial they had wagged at hostile witnesses and an unsympathetic judge, "that the calumnious reflections thrown on my character will recoil on their authors. As for me, I shake them off as the lion shakes the dewdrops from his mane."

Before his first Session closed, Kenealy flickered out like a damp torch. He tried again and again to obtain a footing in the House. Without being rudely repelled he was set back, and long before the Parliament ran its course he became a nonentity.

Mr. Keir Hardie, a man on an infinitely lower plane than Kenealy, who, after all, was a consummate scholar and displayed occasional flashes of genius, is a later illustration of the truth of Canning's axiom. He came in in 1892 as member for West Ham, numbered among

the narrow majority of forty that placed Mr. Gladstone in precarious power. From the first he made it clear that he was no hack—like Mr. Burt, for example—but would let bloated patricians know that the working man is their master. To that end he wore the Cap of Liberty, of somewhat dingy, weather-worn cloth. Also he sported a short jacket, a pair of trousers frayed at the heel, a flannel shirt of dubious colour, and a shock of uncombed hair.

His appearance on the scene kindled keen anticipation in the breast of Lord Randolph Churchill, who saw in him a dangerous element in the Ministerial majority. The member for West Ham did his best to justify that expectation. At the outset the House

“ENTER MR. KEIR HARDIE.”

listened to him with its inbred courtesy and habitual desire to allow every member, however personally inconsiderable, full freedom of speech. It soon found out that Mr. Keir Hardie was as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. His principal effort to justify his appearance on the Parliamentary stage was a motion made in his second Session to discuss the widespread destitution among members of the working classes. He rose after questions, claiming to have the matter discussed as one of urgent public importance. When the Speaker asked if he were supported by the statutory number of forty, only thirty-six rose. The bulk of members, not unmindful of the prevalent condition of the working man or unwilling to help him, did not care to march under Mr. Keir Hardie's flag. His six months of probation were over, and he had shrunk to his proper dimensions. When the dissolution came he, almost unobserved, sank below the Parliamentary horizon.


"EXIT MR. KEIR
HARDIE."

The baths recently added to the luxuries of the House of Commons have been so much appreciated, that there is prospect of necessity for extension. The accom-
modation is certainly poverty-stricken, compared The Parlia-
mentary Bath. with that at the disposal of denizens of the Capitol at Washington. The baths that serve America's legislators are luxuriously fitted below the basement, approach being gained by a service of lifts. Each marble tank is set in a roomy chamber, furnished with every appliance of the dressing-room. During the progress of an important debate there is a great run on the bath-room, it being at Washington the legislative habit to take a bath preliminary to delivery of an oration.

In addition to ordinary hot and cold baths there is a Russian steam bath. I never saw the like in England. The operation commences in a small, windowless room, which has for sole furniture a wooden bench, coils of steam-pipes

garlanding the walls. When the door is shut and the steam turned on the hon. member gasps in a temperature as hot as

he is likely to experience in this current stage of existence. When he is parboiled he goes through a cooling process, beginning with a tub of hot water, and on through a succession, the temperature gradually decreasing.

This process occupies an hour and a half, and is obviously not a luxury to be indulged in when an important division is expected. It is recommended as admirable for rheumatic cases, infallible for a cold.

"A RUSSIAN BATH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS."

It might be tried in the House of Commons should it be decided to extend the bathing accommodation.

CHAPTER XXIII

JULY

WHEN we consider the succession of amendments and improvements in Parliamentary procedure that has marked the course of the last twenty years, it is reasonable to expect the factory at Westminster to at least **Parliamentary Reforms.** double its output of legislation. There are in the present House some (surprisingly few) members who can recall the good old times when the House, commencing public business at half-past four, thought Ministers fortunate if the first order of the day were reached before seven o'clock.

In those halcyon days members putting a question delighted themselves, their wives and daughters in the gallery, by reading aloud its every word. The Irish members, quick to see innocent-looking openings for obstruction, seized upon what was ironically called the question "hour." They put down innumerable questions of prodigious length with as much sting directed against the Saxon—particularly Mr. Forster and Mr. George Trevelyan, successively Irish Secretaries—as the vigilance of the clerks at the table permitted.

This went on for years, the House being relieved of the incubus by the intervention of Mr. Joseph Cowen, then member for Newcastle. He pointed out that the questions being printed on a paper held in every member's hand there was no necessity for reading the text, and suggested that citation of the number would suffice. The Speaker assented,

and thus by an unpremeditated stroke the House was relieved from an intolerable burden. If there is room for more statues in the precincts of the House of Commons, or for a fresh stained-glass window in the Octagon Hall, a grateful Legislature should not forget "Joe" Cowen.

There was another outrage on the question hour that long survived this radical reform. The fact Arising out of that Answer. that there were only ninety

or a hundred printed questions on the paper did not, up to a period not more distant than the coming of Mr. Gully to the Chair, indicate the precise amount of time that would be appropriated for the service. When a printed question had been replied to, up got the gentleman responsible for it, and repeating the formula, "Arising out of that answer," another question was put. Other members above or below the gangway, thinly veiling a

A PARLIAMENTARY BENE-
FACTOR—MR. JOSEPH COWEN.

controversial point in the garb of a question, followed, and quite a sharp debate lasting over several minutes sprang up.

Mr. Sexton excelled all others in this art. On an average a question on the printed list standing in his name was the prelude to five others, each "arising out of the answer just given." Not the least valuable of the services rendered by Mr. Gully during his occupancy of the Chair has been stern repression of this irregularity. The Orders, or rather the custom of the House, make it permissible that a Minister having replied to a question on the paper a member may without notice put a further question designed to elucidate a point left obscure. He may not at the moment start on a new tack. Under Mr. Gully's alert supervision it

is amazing to find how little a Minister leaves unanswered of questions set forth on the paper.

The deliberate and noisy prolongation of questions was only one of the opportunities for obstruction the question hour invited mutinous members to avail themselves of. The license of supplementary questions frequently worked the House into an uncontrollable storm of passion. In the midst of it would be heard a voice exclaiming, "I move that this House do now adjourn." The member who spoke, however personally obscure, was by the utterance of this incantation master of the whole Parliamentary proceedings. The business of the day, whatever it might be, of whatever range of Imperial importance, was peremptorily set aside, and on this formal motion the flood of angry temper rushed forth uncontrolled, occupying as much of the sitting as physical endurance made possible.

A little more than nineteen years ago this month there was a scene in the House of Commons that illustrates the working of what were ironically called its rules. Mr. O'Donnell had a question on the paper making a violent personal attack on M. Challemel-Lacour, just appointed French Ambassador at the Court of St. James. Sir Charles Dilke, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs at the time, made due answer.

*A famous
Scene.*

THE O'DONNELL TERROR.

Whereupon Mr. O'Donnell rose and began to make a speech enlarging on the indictment set forth on his printed question.

That such a course of procedure was permissible will appear incredible to members of the present House of Commons. Mr. O'Donnell, as usual when combating

authority in the House of Commons, knew what he was about. Attempts being made to stop him, he quietly replied, "I will conclude by a motion," meaning that he would move the adjournment of the House.

Gulliver bound by the manifold threads of the pigmies of Liliput was not more helpless than was the Imperial House of Commons in the hands of the member for Dungarvan. Mr. Gladstone, distraught, took the extreme course of moving that Mr. O'Donnell be not heard. That was a bold last card for the Premier to play. Mr. Parnell easily trumped it. Mr. O'Donnell had moved the adjournment of the House. Mr. Parnell now moved the alternative obstructive motion—the adjournment of the debate. For eight hours by Westminster clock the angry storm of words waged. At one o'clock in the morning Mr. O'Donnell retired triumphant from the scene, and the wearied House, with nice assumption of nothing having happened in the interval, proceeded with the list of questions.

Gentlemen of England, who live at ease in the House of Commons in these last days of the century, beginning questions at half-past three, with the certainty that the Orders of the Day will be reached before half-past four, and that all will be over by midnight, find a difficulty in believing that, less than twenty years ago, such things might be. They were, and it took considerable repetition and increased aggravation before the House of Commons shook itself free from the chains that bound it.

Another, a less dramatic, but, by its regular recurrence, not less effective, block to the advance of business was the older manner of giving notices of motion. Every

Balloting.

Tuesday evening, when the long labour of questions had been lifted from the shoulders of the House, the clerk at the table unlocked a box containing a pile of slips of paper carefully wrapped up. These were notices of motion, and the receptacle was the ballot-box. In full view of the watchful House the clerk, dipping the outstretched fingers of both hands into the mass, lifted them up and stirred them about as if he were publicly making a

plum-pudding. This was designed to avoid suspicion of favouritism. Selecting at random one of the folded pieces of paper, he opened it and read aloud the number. The Speaker, referring to a long catalogue, called the name of the member to which the number was attached. Thereupon the member rose and recited the terms of a resolution he proposed to submit or the name of a Bill he desired to introduce.

On the first night of the Session four Tuesdays may be balloted for. It being the rule that a day for private members' motions may be secured only a month ahead, it follows that the weekly ballot there-

MAKING A PUDDING.

after presented only one opportunity—"this day four weeks." Nevertheless, the whole box of tricks was gone through. Every folded paper was opened, the number called out by the clerk at the table, and the corresponding name on the list cited by the Speaker. Then would the stranger in the gallery be mystified by observing member after member, his name cried from the Chair, respond by mutely raising his hat. The prize of that day four weeks had been snatched by another hand. Nothing remained. The succeeding proceedings were a mere formula, an absolute waste of presumably precious time. Nevertheless the box had always been scrupulously emptied, the list gone through to the bitter and far-off end.

So year after year, in entirely altered circumstances, with the *fin-de-siècle* device of syndicates in full practice "nobbling"

the ballot, the old order of things prevailed. Just as a flock of sheep observing the leader leap over an imaginary obstacle jump at precisely the same spot, so the House of Commons, the highest development of British intelligence, carried on this ludicrous game.

Only a few Sessions ago the Speaker introduced the practice of inquiring as soon as the available Tuesday was appropriated whether any other members have motions to bring forward. Of course they have not. The box is shut up, the list laid down, and the business of the day proceeded with.

Once the hand of Parliament is put to the plough of reform of procedure it makes a deep, long furrow. Another tradition which long dominated the House of Commons was that private members should on the opening day publicly announce their legislative intentions. This was called giving notice of motions. It was all very well in the days when the number was limited to a dozen or at most a score. In these days, with special wires to provincial newspaper offices, and with London correspondents on the look-out for the doings of local members, the situation is changed. Much as people coming to town for the season leave cards on a circle of friends advertising their arrival, so modern members of Parliament let their constituents know they are at their post by the cheap contrivance of giving notice of motion on the opening day of the Session.

In recent times the average aggregate number exceeded two hundred. The business was carried on by the process described of the ballot-box and the list in the Speaker's hand. An hour, sometimes an hour and a half, of the freshest day of the Session was occupied with a performance that had no recommendation save its free advertising. Now the balloting is done by the clerks in a Committee-room upstairs, and a working hour of the Session is saved.

There remains an obvious consequential reform, whose accomplishment cannot be long delayed. Private members having had a field-day on the first night of the Session,

have another performance all to themselves on the second day. This is called "Bringing in Bills"—a tiresome, objectless performance that might be dispensed with without injuring the foundations of the State. The Speaker, reading from his list, recites the name of a Bill, and asks, "Who is prepared to bring in this Bill?" Up rises a private member, and reads a list of names, modestly concluding with the not least important "and Myself." When the list has been gone through in monotonous fashion, the members in charge of Bills crowd the Bar, are called up one by one by the Speaker, and hand to the clerk at the table what purports to be their Bill. The proceeding is fraudulent, as well as foolish. The document is no Bill at all, merely a sheet of foolscap folded over and endorsed with a title.

This Session seventy-one Bills were brought in. Seventy-one times the Speaker asked, "Who is prepared to bring in this Bill?" Seventy-one lists of members were recited by as many members, concluding, with varying inflexions of modesty, "and Myself." Seventy-one members crowded at the Bar. Seventy-one names were called out by the Speaker. Seventy-one members marched up to the table blushing with consciousness of the sham document carried in their hands. Seventy-one times the clerk at the table to whom the fraud was furtively handed read its title. Seventy-one times the Speaker inquired, "What day for the second reading?" Three score and eleven fixtures were made.

It is not worth the trouble of looking up how many were kept. If when next month the prorogation takes place it appear that the odd eleven Bills have been added to the Statute Book, private members may boast a record Session.

The death of Sir John Mowbray removes from the House of Commons almost the last, certainly the best known, of an old type. In the present assembly its honoured Father was the only relic of the Parliament elected in 1852. He was first returned for Durham in 1853, and sat continuously through eleven Parliaments. For forty

Bringing
in Bills.

Sir John
Mowbray.

years he bore the honoured rank of Privy Councillor. He held modest office under three Administrations. Lord Derby called him to the Treasury Bench first in 1858, renewing the invitation in 1866. When, in 1868, Mr. Disraeli was Premier he promptly availed himself of the opportunity of associating with his Ministry so fine a type of the English gentleman. For nearly a quarter of a century Sir John acted as chairman of the Committee on Standing Orders and of the Committee of Selection.

He lived in and for the House of Commons, serene in the surety that he had not a single enemy. A party man in the sense that he always spoke and voted with the Conservatives, he looked with generous eye on the political vagaries of others. At a time when, owing to their violence in the House of Commons and suspicion of complicity in crime in Ireland, Irish members of the House of Commons were regarded as pariahs, Sir John Mowbray preserved personal relations with such among them as he had known in quieter times. He was not a persistent contributor to debate. When he rose he was listened to with the respect his high character and far-reaching associations with public men and historic epochs commanded.

He had seen much and, happily, had preserved clear impressions. Only last year he gave me a vivid account of the Coronation of William IV. He was at the time a Westminster boy, and availed himself of the ancient privilege of the school to take his place in the Abbey, just above the benches allotted to peers on the occasion of the coronation. He saw Queen Victoria riding in State to be crowned in the Abbey. He was at this time

"BORN JUST BEFORE WATER-
LOO"—THE LATE SIR JOHN
MOWBRAY.

at Oxford. When the Queen married, the undergraduates drew up a loyal address. Young Mowbray had the good luck to be included in the deputation that proceeded to London to present it. He told me he did not remember very much about the Queen, his attention being concentrated on the figure of the Duke of Wellington standing in close attention on his youthful Sovereign.

"You know," he said, "I was born just before the Battle of Waterloo, and felt I had a sort of connection with the Duke."

Having long passed the age of fourscore the end could not be far off. It was undoubtedly hastened by his insistence upon attending to his Parliamentary duties. A rumour was current that he meant to retire from Parliamentary life. He would show every one that there was no foundation for such gossip. So he came up one bleak spring afternoon, took his familiar seat above the gangway, chatted with friends in the lobby, and went off to have a cup of tea. A very old friend who sat at the table with him told me he after a while withdrew in alarm. The old man was in such a state of nervous excitement, talked so rapidly, coughed so ominously, he thought he would be better left to himself. A very short time after Sir John sank back shivering in his chair.

"I am very cold," he said to another friend, a famous doctor, who approached him with shy endeavour not to look professional.

It seemed he would die in the House in which he had lived so long. But they managed to get him to his own home, where soon the cold of which he had complained deepened into the chillness of death. Sir John Mowbray was not a great statesman, nor will his name shine forth from Parliamentary annals as that of an orator or as a debater. But he was of the kind of men who form the backbone of the House of Commons, who have built up and who, whilst they are with us, maintain its unique reputation.

The lot of the gentleman who has charge of the ventila-

tion apparatus in the House of Commons is, like the police-
man's, not a happy one. The machinery at his
The House of Commons' Air. disposal is the most elaborate, and—having had longer continuous experience than the majority of members—I venture to say, is the most successful in the world. There is nothing about which two or three people gathered together more sharply differ than on the point of temperature. What is one man's freezing point is another man's approach to suffocation. In cold weather there are always elderly members sending imperative injunctions to have the temperature raised, followed in a quarter of an hour by angry protests from younger men that they can scarcely breathe in so heated an atmosphere. In summer time a window, whether open or shut, is equally a *casus belli*. The best thing the engineer can do is to go his own way, unmindful of private protests on one side or the other.

If any member wants to realise how great is the blessing of the ventilation machinery of the House of Commons, he should go over to "another place" on one of the rare occasions when it is crowded in view of debate on topics relating either to rent or religion. The elaborate contrivance that supplies the House of Commons with fresh air does not extend to the House of Lords. That gilded chamber is dependent, like ordinary halls, upon the manipulation of the windows. After a few hours' occupation by anything approaching a crowd, the atmosphere becomes distinctly stuffy. No matter how long or how late or how crowded the House of Commons may sit, the atmosphere suffers scarcely perceptible change. Ever fresh draughts of air, drawn in from the surface of the salubrious Thames, purified by passage through thick layers of cotton-wool, iced in summer, warmed in winter, are driven up through the open ironwork of the floor, circulated through the chamber, steadily passing out by apertures in the roof.

In the good old days of all-night sittings I have left for a hasty bath and breakfast, and coming back in the brightness of early morning have found the atmosphere

of the otherwise worn-out House as fresh as it was when the long sitting opened.

Lord Peel tells me a curious circumstance garnered from his experience when Speaker. It was found that whenever discussion became heated the thermometer which guides the engineer in his adjustment of the temperature invariably went up, falling as soon as order was restored.

Proposed
Annual
Return.

At the end of each Session returns are ordered, showing among miscellaneous matters how many days the House has

"A HASTY BATH."

sat, the duration of sittings, the aggregate of divisions, the number of times the closure has been moved, and the proportion of acceptance by the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means. Here is suggestion of a new and significant inquiry. A table marking the maximum temperature of the House from day to day, with foot-notes showing the subjects under discussion, would be most useful to the student and historian of Parliamentary manners.

It would be interesting to know (1) what was the

temperature in the House on the 27th of July 1893, five minutes before the cry of "Judas!" smote the ear of Mr. Chamberlain as he stood at the table, genially comparing Mr. Gladstone to King Herod at the moment preceding the awful fate following on a reign of unrelieved wickedness; (2) the temperature marked ten minutes later when Mr. Hayes Fisher seized Mr. Logan by the back of the neck and thrust him forth from the Front Opposition Bench.

Early in the Session a private measure, The General Power Distributing Company Bill, was disposed of by the euphuism of a resolution declaring that it be
Resurgam. "read a second time upon this day six months." That is the delicate manner in which the House of Commons, dissembling its love, kicks Bills downstairs. The idea is that on the appointed date the House will be in recess. The Bill confidently coming up to be read a second time finds the lights are fled, the garlands dead, and all but he departed.

As the Session advances nearer to its close accident is averted by reducing the interval, obnoxious Bills being appointed to be read a second time "on this day three months."

Before the introduction of the saving ordinance whereby Supply automatically closes so that the prorogation inevitably takes place in the first fortnight of August, there was always opening for accident. In this particular case it was on the 3rd of March the House resolved to read the Bill a second time. That would bring it up again on the 3rd of September. In the storm and stress of Mr. Gladstone's prime it was by no means impossible to find the Session prolonged into the first week in September.

There is a case wherein the unexpected happened. Among his active legislative habits the late Lord Denman
Lord Denman's took charge of a Woman's Suffrage Bill. At
little Surprise. the beginning of every Session he brought it in, and noble lords, not to be outdone in the matter of regularity, every Session threw it out. One year it happened that the

accustomed fate befell his pet measure in the third week of February. In the fewest possible minutes the House resolved that the Bill should "be read a second time on this day six months." Lord Denman, like a well-known rabbit, lay low and said nuffin. The Session proved a busy one. Both Houses were sitting in the third week of August. One night Lord Denman rose, and blandly reminding their lordships of the date, claimed the privilege of having his Bill read a second time as ordered.

As a rule the House of Lords had Lord Denman at their feet, hustling about the poor pathetic figure as if it

"LAY LOW AND SAID NUFFIN."—THE LATE LORD DENMAN.

were a football. Now he had the House of Lords between finger and thumb. By some hocus-pocus of distinction between calendar months and lunar months the House wriggled out of the difficulty. Lord Denman carried his grey hairs in sorrow down to the grave with the pained certainty that he had been cheated out of the reward of a rare opportunity.

Mr. Balfour does not often say spiteful things. Reticence does not arise from incapacity. At dinner the other night conversation turned upon a nominal supporter of the Government whose general bearing does not ^{A Back View.} endear him to mankind. A tender-hearted colleague was trying to make the best of a bad job.

"He means well," he said, "but is perhaps a little soured

by disappointment. He may, you know, think he is acting for the best. Anyhow, let us take the most favourable view of him possible under all circumstances."

"Very well," said Prince Arthur, with unwonted grimness. "Let us see his back."

CHAPTER XXIV

AUGUST

SEVEN years ago this month Mr. Gladstone formed his fourth and last Administration. Looking down the catalogue, it is startling to find how few then mustered are "We come as Shadows." in the line of battle to-day. Mr. Gladstone is dead, so are his Lord Chancellor, Lord Herschell; his President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Mundella; his Second Whip, Mr. Ellis; and his Master of Horse, Lord Oxenbridge. Of the rest, his Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Rosebery, has retired from official connection with the Party. So have his Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir William Harcourt, and his Chief Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Morley. His Secretary for Scotland, Sir George Trevelyan, has gone back to his first love, Literature. His Vice-President of the Council, Mr. Acland, has retired owing to ill-health. His Postmaster-General, Mr. Arnold Morley, has long been

"IN THE CORNER."

out of Parliament ; whilst his First Commissioner of Works, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre ; his Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. Hibbert ; his Parliamentary Secretary for India, Mr. George Russell ; his Vice-Chamberlain, Mr. "Bobbie" Spencer ; and his Controller of the Household, Mr. Leveson-Gower, are shelved owing to lack of appreciation on the part of the constituencies.

His President of the Board of Agriculture, Mr. Herbert Gardner, is sunk in the obscurity of the House of Lords, where he has been joined by the Chief Whip of the Parliament of 1892, Mr. Marjoribanks. His Under-Secretary for War, Lord Sandhurst, is Governor of Bombay. His Attorney-General, Sir Charles Russell, is Lord Chief Justice of England. His Solicitor-General, Mr. Rigby, is also wrapped in the dignity of the ermine. His Lord Chancellor of Ireland, Mr. Walker, is Lord Justice of Appeal. All this in seven short years.

The game which used to be played round the seat of Mr. Gibson Bowles had its serious effect in drawing from the Speaker judgment on a nice question. The member for Kings Lynn, with characteristic discernment, early in his Parliamentary career secured the corner seat on the bench immediately behind that on which Ministers sit. It has many advantages, being central, easy of access, and conveniently contiguous to Her Majesty's Ministers, who are able to benefit by prompt communication of any counsels that may occur to Mr. Bowles at crises of debate.

Cap'en Tommy
Bowles's
"Pitch."

MR. TOMMY BOWLES—HIS CORNER SEAT.

The coign of vantage was, to begin with, secured in the ordinary fashion by early arrival and attendance at prayers.

After a while Mr. Bowles grew slack in these observances. In other cases where eminent men have appropriated particular seats it is the custom to regard them as sacred. Mr. Courtney, for example, has a corner seat below the gangway, and if by chance he were absent from prayers, and so lose his legal claim to the place, he would doubtless on arriving find it reserved for him. It is one of the penalties of greatness that it excites jealousy. Envious eyes were cast upon Mr. Bowles's seat. One day,

MR. GEDGE IN POSSESSION.

arriving at question time, he was pained and shocked to find Mr. Gedge installed in his place, holding it by the invulnerable right of a ticket with his name on it stuck in the receptacle at the back.

Mr. Gedge, when he is not looking after the bishops, or keeping the Prime Minister straight on constitutional points, is the guardian of ancient customs pertaining to the appropriation of seats on the floor of the House. His detection of the manœuvre whereby the corner seat and the one next to it on the Front Bench below the gangway on the Opposition side were invariably secured by Mr. Labouchere and Sir Charles Dilke is a matter of history.

Mr. Gedge's incursion on Mr. Bowles's territory led to a succession of scenes, watched with boyish delight by the House. On the day after the first incursion, Mr. Bowles came down in good time for prayers, resolved that nothing in the way of regularity should be lacking. Marching up to his place to deposit his hat, a preliminary process to obtaining the ticket that completes a claim, he found a hat already in possession.

Mr. Gedge's
Strategy.

The Siege
of the
Corner Seat.

Robinson Crusoe coming on a man's footstep in what he had regarded as a desert island was not more startled. From a

certain indefinable air of truculence combined with implacable respectability, he recognised the headgear as Mr. Gedge's.

Mr. Bowles is not easily beaten. The next day he went down before luncheon, marked the seat as his own by placing his hat on it, and enjoyed full possession throughout the evening sitting. Then followed a series of marching and counter-marching, accompanied by varied results. The member for Walsall had the advantage of living close by, and being an early riser, Mr. Bowles,

TOUJOURS GEDGE.

reaching the House as early as six o'clock in the morning, elate with the certainty of triumph, was confronted with the silent sardonic regard of Mr. Gedge's hat.

It was at this stage of the campaign the Speaker's attention was called to the matter. He was asked to give a ruling on the point whether it is lawful for a member, having pegged out a claim to a particular seat by depositing his hat, straightway to depart about his business in the City or at the West-end, a strategy made possible by the possession of a second hat. The Speaker, having taken thought and consulted the authorities, gave judgment in the negative. A member, he said, having claimed a seat in the usual manner, must remain within the precincts of the House till his right be fully established by possession of the ticket.

Twenty-one years ago the competition for seats led to a striking scene. Mr. Dillwyn, long time member for Swansea, was the regular occupant of the corner seat below the gangway, now filled by Mr. Labouchere. He held it undisturbed

till Mr. Roebuck was returned for Sheffield at a by-election. The old gentleman, presuming on his ^{Mr. Dillwyn's} years and fame, coming down to the House at ^{Seat.} whatever hour suited his convenience, dislodged Mr. Dillwyn.

This genial custom was suffered for some time. But the worm will turn at last, and one day Mr. Dillwyn did. The situation is described in the following letter here published for the first time. I take it from a copy in the neat hand-writing of Mr. Dillwyn which he gave me at the time. It bears date House of Commons, 23rd May 1878, and commences :—

MY DEAR MR. ROEBUCK—Some time ago I mentioned to you that, although I wished to accommodate you by giving up to you the seat which I usually occupy in the House when you come here, I would ask you to let me know when you intended to come, as otherwise I am left without a place, and as I take rather an active part in the business of the House, this often occasions me considerable inconvenience. I understood you to assent to the reasonableness of this request, and upon one occasion you did so inform me. Of late, however, you have not done so, and, consequently, I have several times during recent debates been without a place, although I had secured my usual one, as I did not like to prevent you from occupying it. Under these circumstances I hope you will excuse me if I consider the arrangement at an end, and that I shall decline to give you up my usual seat should I have secured it. I may say that several members who sit on the Opposition side of the House do not like to hear speeches directed against the Opposition, and in praise of the Government, such as you almost invariably make, emanating from their own side of the House, and they are surprised that you should like to make them from that side, and that I should make way for you on it. Very many representations to this effect have been made to me since your speech this evening, and I cannot say that I am surprised at it. Wishing to act with courtesy with you, I think it right to inform you before you come next to the House that I shall in future decline to vacate for you any place which I may have secured.—Believe me, Yours truly,

L. L. DILLWYN.

Before a week had sped after the despatch of this letter crisis came. During question time, when the House was densely crowded, Mr. Roebuck entered dragging his leaden footsteps in the direction of the corner seat. His habit was

to stand there till Mr. Dillwyn either rose and left or moved lower down the bench. Now, as he stood and waited, Mr. Dillwyn steadily stared at the Treasury Bench, ignoring his presence. Not a word passed. The House paused, watching the scene. Finding the member for Swansea immovable, Mr. Roebuck crossed over to the Conservative side, half-a-dozen members, amid wild cheering, springing up to give him a seat within the Government fold.

Sir William Hart-Dyke is at least free from the charge of intentional humour. He trotted his bull out caparisoned

in almost
funereal trap- An odd Fish.

pings. Debate sprang up upon a motion, made by Mr. James Lowther, charging the Lord Chancellor with breach of privilege, inasmuch as he had presided at a meeting summoned to select a Unionist candidate to represent Oxford University in place of the ever-lamented Sir John Mowbray. Sir William argued that such conduct on the part of a peer became actionable only if the interference took place after a writ had been issued. At the

MR. HART-DYKE'S BULL: "CATCHING A BIG
FISH ON THE TOP OF A TREE."

same time he was willing to concede to Mr. Lowther that he had for his purposes been fortunate in finding an offender in a person so highly placed as the Lord Chancellor.

"I admit," he said, "that the right honourable gentleman has undoubtedly gone up to the top of the tree and caught a very big fish."

A striking success on somewhat different lines was obtained this Session by Mr. Kilbride. It was during the discussion on the second reading of the Food and Drugs Bill. Question arose as to how far the use of margarine might be safely encouraged. Mr. Kilbride startled the House, and after a moment's consideration sent it into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, by announcing that margarine is "chiefly used for cooking porpoises."

That is how the humble familiar word "purposes" sounds when enunciated in fine rotund Galway accent.

A friend old enough to have been in the House of Commons when Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister recalls a scene in which there was delivered a speech at once the shortest and, as far as my memory goes, the bitterest ever uttered. It was in the Session of 1862, and, as happened in those days, Lord Palmerston, seated on the Treasury Bench, had fallen fast asleep. A member speaking from a bench immediately behind Ministers delivered a violent diatribe against the foreign policy of the Government. He was, as nearly as the undeveloped resources of the century permitted, something approaching the Ashmead-Bartlett type. It happened that, contrary to his custom, he had said something that needed answering. A colleague rousing the Premier hastily whispered in his ear.

Palmerston, with the instincts of an old war-horse, instantly rose to join in the fray. In his half-dazed state he had evidently misunderstood the source of the attack. "In reply to the right honourable gentleman opposite," he said, concluding assault had come from the usual quarter.

A new Dinner Dish.

The Retort conclusive.

"OH, IT WAS ONLY YOU, WAS IT?"

His colleague hastily whispered correction, but was again misunderstood.

"The hon. member below the gangway," said Palmerston, turning in that direction, "has thought fit to attribute to Her Majesty's Ministers——"

Once more his coat-tails were pulled, and with audible inquiry, "Eh? What? What?" This time he mastered the name of the assailant of his policy. He turned round, looked his hon. friend full in the face, "Oh, it was only you, was it?" he said, and resumed his seat.

Does any one read Kinglake's *Eothen* now? Looking over it I find a remarkable forecast of the present state of things in Egypt. In the shortest chapter of the
A Prophecy. book, containing an eloquent apostrophe of the Sphinx, Kinglake writes: "And we, we shall die, and Islam will wither away; and the Englishman, leaning far over to hold his loved India, will plant a firm foot on the banks of the Nile, and sit in the seats of the Faithful, and still that sleepless rock will be watching, and watching, the works of the new, busy race with those same sad, earnest eyes, and the same tranquil mien everlastingly."

Eothen was published in 1844, at which time Mehemet Pasha had, of his strength, forced the Sultan to concede to him the position of hereditary Viceroy. England had not at the time the slightest foothold in the country, nor was there anything visibly working in that direction. But Kinglake had a clear vision of the far-off future, and fitly framed it in this glowing passage.

I read in the newspapers how, preaching in the Abbey on a Sunday afternoon, "Canon Gore told a striking story,
An old Story re-told. which he said had come to his ears within the last few days. A hardened professional pick-pocket found himself within sight of death, and for the first time in his life had leisure to think. During a somewhat protracted illness the reality of the love of God was vividly borne in upon him, and he became, in the deepest sense,

converted from darkness to light. He had received the Sacrament, and was *in articulo mortis*, when the priest, who was reading the commendatory prayer by his bedside, heard a hoarse whisper in his ear, 'Look out for your watch.' As the clergyman raised his head, the man lay dead with the watch in his hand. The will, said Canon Gore, was not strong enough to resist the habitual instinctive motions of the body, yet was strong enough to protest against its own act with the voice."

I know that story. It comes "From Behind the Speaker's Chair," and has journeyed many times round the world since; "within the last few days" it struck the Canon's ear. I am stricken by paternal regret on observing how sadly its points have been rubbed off in the journey. "The priest" was the late Mr. Henry White, and it was during his chaplaincy of the House of Commons that the grim incident occurred. Late one winter night a messenger came to his door and besought his attendance at the bedside of a sick man. He obeyed the summons, and was led to a house in a squalid neighbourhood by Waterloo Bridge. Entering a room lit by a tallow candle, he found a man of wasted frame and haggard features lying on a truckle-bed.

Curious to know why he, living some distance off, should be sent for, he questioned the sick man, who told him that he once dropped in at St. Margaret's Church, where Mr. White was preaching. The subject chanced to be the repentance and salvation of the thief on the Cross. The dying man admitted that he had been a thief from his boyhood, had spent a considerable portion of his still young life in prison. But he was so much touched by the sermon that he had abjured his evil courses, had striven to lead an honest life, had mostly starved, and, feeling he was dying, there came upon him a strong desire to hear again the voice that once so strangely uplifted him.

Mr. White, much affected, prayed by the bedside, then sat and talked with the man. As he grew weaker he leaned over and whispered consoling words. Rising

as he heard the death-rattle, he found himself grasped by the watch-chain, his watch in the closed hand of the penitent thief.

The ruling passion, literally, strong in death, propinquity had been irresistible.

SESSION 1900

CHAPTER XXV

JANUARY

“THE Angel of Death hovers over the House of Commons. You can almost hear the rustling of its wings.” Of course, there is no statutory reason why the present Parliament should be dissolved this year. As **The Dissolu-
tion.** far as precedent goes, it might, without reproach, continue its existence through next Session, the General Election taking place at some convenient time after harvest. The Parliament which, for the first time, saw Disraeli in power as well as in office, meeting on the 21st of February 1874, ran through six years and sixty-seven days. Only twice in Victoria’s long reign has that record been beaten. In both cases it was—rare coincidence—exceeded by the same number of days. The Parliament the Queen found at work when she came to the Throne placed Lord Melbourne in power in the year 1835. It sat for six years and 141 days, an accomplishment precisely paralleled by the last Parliament over which Lord Palmerston presided.

The Parliament of 1880-85 did not survive for quite six years. The Unionist Parliament of 1886 exceeded that term by fifteen days. On the 1st of July next year the full term of six years’ office will have been enjoyed by the present Ministry. If a General Election does not take place till September or October of next year, Lord Salisbury and

his colleagues cannot be reproached for unduly lingering on the stage. But will they play the game so low? The shade of Lord Beaconsfield seems to forbid it. There is little doubt that had he dissolved Parliament immediately after his return from Berlin arm-in-arm with Lord Salisbury, bringing Peace with Honour, he would have obtained a triumphantly renewed lease of power. He hesitated, and was lost. Lulled into false security by the blustering popularity of the hour, the Beaconsfield Ministry held on, to face the fearful rout that befell them in the spring of 1880.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, receiving at the Reform Club meeting a unanimous call to the Leadership, in succession to Sir William Harcourt, timidly expressed a hope that, at least upon points of procedure not involving great issues, the party would submit

ref.

THE ONLY SAFE PLACE (FROM THE MINISTERIAL POINT OF VIEW).

to their leader's judgment. Of course it was not contemplated that on issues affecting great principles a man's conscience should be suborned in the interests of party solidarity. Sir Henry is not Naaman that he should plead for indulgence if from motives of policy he were constrained to bow himself in the House of Rimmon. He simply meant that for the sake of the party itself he should not be habitually subjected, as Sir William Harcourt was, and as was not unknown in the experience of Mr. Gladstone, to having his advice on immaterial matters flouted and his

authority lowered in the eyes of the House and the world.

How this appeal prospered the records of the first Session of last year testify. To quote three instances that recur to the mind: On the 1st of May, the Old Age Pension Committee having been selected in the ordinary manner by consultation and agreement between the Whips of the two parties, its nomination was moved from the Treasury Bench. Objection to its constitution was taken by some members of the Opposition Benches, and in two divisions the Leader found himself opposed in the division lobby by a section of his following. On the 19th of June Mr. Balfour made the customary motion appropriating for the remainder of the Session Tuesdays and Wednesdays for Government business. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, speaking in his official capacity, unreservedly admitted the reasonableness of the demand. It being opposed from below the



A DIFFICULT MOUNT.

gangway to the point of a division, the Leader of the Opposition, amid ironical cheers from the delighted Ministerialists, walked out of the House, a number of his nominal supporters going into the "No" lobby. On the 3rd of July conversation arose on a resolution affecting the settlement of the Niger territory. A Blue-book fully recording the history of the case was at the printers, and issue was promised in a few days. Mr. Balfour made the not unreasonable suggestion that it would be better to post-

pone discussion till the Blue-book was circulated, when members would be in full possession of the facts. The Leader of the Opposition, a plain business man, having secured a pledge that the papers should be immediately forthcoming, assented. Whereupon his followers below the gangway moved to report progress, insisted upon taking a division, and drove their leader into the Government lobby.

It will be seen from consideration of these modern instances that there was at stake no question of principle or conscience. The mutiny in face of the enemy **How Long!** was due to pure cussedness. To some minds it will appear that the trifling nature of the quarrel adds to the seriousness of the situation. For petty, wilful insubordination no excuse can be found in the conduct of the Captain. Bubbling with good humour, always urbane, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman has upon meet occasion shown that these qualities are not incompatible with fighting force. In varying circumstances he has displayed a born genius for filling a thankless post. He has known when to speak and, more priceless gift, has known when to be silent. In accepting the arduous, thankless task of leading a Liberal minority in the House of Commons, he, animated by a sense of duty and loyalty, made infinite sacrifice of personal ease and comfort. It is a poor reward to find himself publicly flouted by a section of his nominal followers, however insignificant in numbers or inconsiderable in personal position.

This is a watchword that still lives in political commentary, though it is not so frequently dragged in as it used to be. I wonder how many men of the present generation know its history? I confess I did not till I learned it sitting at the feet of that vivacious chronicler, Sir Algernon West.

Sir Algernon, at that time fresh home from a visit to the Crimea, remembers sitting under the gallery of the House of Commons when Sir de Lacy Evans expounded the riddle

to puzzled members. Upon the death of Lord Raglan, General Simpson, second in command, received from Lord Panmure, then War Minister, the following message: "You are appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Crimea. Take care of Dowb." Sir de Lacy Evans, who was with the General when the telegram arrived, gave a racy description of the scene. The staff called in to assist in solving the mystery were utterly at sea. Officers of the Engineers were summoned with unavailing inquiry as to what part of the trenches Dowb might be serving his country in.

At length there flashed upon one of the staff recollection that Lord Panmure had at the seat of war a cousin named Dowbeggin. At this great crisis in the campaign, the Commander-in-Chief dead, a new man selected to succeed him, the cousinly heart of the Minister of War was touched by the opportunity of serving his kinsman. Over land and sea he cabled (at his country's expense) "Take care of Dowbeggin." The economical operator SIR ALGERNON WEST. cut the name short after the fourth letter. Thus it came to pass that the nation was enriched with the canny aphorism, "Take care of Dowb."

Lord Panmure must have been a peculiarly stupid man even for the governing class that came to the front at the epoch of the Crimean War. The late Lord Malmesbury had a delightful story about him, current on the authority of that charming lady, Mrs. Norton. When the pathetic remnant of veterans came home from the Crimea on the conclusion of peace the Queen reviewed them. After the ceremony, Mrs. Norton asked Lord Panmure: "Was the Queen touched?" "Bless my soul, no!" said the Secretary of State for War, horrified at suggestion of such indiscretion. "She had a brass railing before her, and no one could touch

her." "I mean," said Mrs. Norton, hurriedly, "was she moved?" "Moved!" cried Lord Panmure, beginning to think much gadding about had made Mrs. Norton mad. "She had no occasion to move."

Here the conversation terminated.

CHAPTER XXVI

FEBRUARY

MR. ARTHUR BALFOUR is, with lessening vehemence, accused of burking debate because he strictly limits to something over a score the number of nights allotted to discussion in Committee of Supply. Every one ^{Voting Supply.} who pays close attention to the business of the House knows that since that rule was established, with its condition of giving one night a week to Committee from the beginning of the Session, Supply is more fully and intelligently discussed than at any earlier period within the memory of the oldest member.

It is true that if at a specified date in August particular Votes have not been passed they are carried without debate by the automatic pressure of the closure. That is very sad. But exactly the same thing came to pass under the clumsier machinery of elder days. What happened then was prolongation of the Session, a House kept by a few score of fagged members, a series of late sittings, and the Votes carried in their integrity after a prolonged squabble.

One of the most laborious Sessions of modern times was that of 1881, when Mr. Gladstone, full of great schemes of legislative reform, was met by Irish obstruction, then in its palmy days. Looking back I find that the average length of the daily sittings in that Session was nine hours and five minutes. Of these, not less than 238 hours and 35 minutes were, in the course

**The Length
of Daily
Sittings.**

of the Session, spent after midnight. I have not at hand information about the average length of the daily sittings last Session. But I should be surprised if they fell far short of the terrible times of nineteen years ago, with the important difference that work was wound up before midnight.

Previous to the Session of 1881, the House sat longest and latest in the quinquennial period, 1831 to 1836. That was the Reform epoch, when Sir Charles Wetherell, father and founder of Parliamentary obstruction as fifty years later

“IRISH OBSTRUCTION I”

practised by Mr. Parnell and Mr. Biggar, was to the fore. The House sat daily on the average for eight hours and forty minutes. After the spurt round the Reform Bill, exhausted nature sought repose, and for the next quinquennial period the average of sittings ran down to six hours and thirty-two minutes. It jumped up again in Corn Law time to a daily average exceeding eight hours, a state of things not paralleled till, after the General Election of 1868, Mr. Gladstone came in with a run. From 1872 to 1876 the average daily sitting was extended to eight hours and four minutes. The

time went on increasing till, as we have seen, in 1881 the sittings through 154 days, an exceptionally long Session, exceeded an average of nine hours.

What is the best hour for the daily

**The hour of
Meeting.** meeting
for busi-

ness has always been a troubled question for the House of Commons. In 1833, the sitting hitherto commencing at four o'clock, a curious and long-forgotten ex-

pedient was tried. It was ordered that the House should

FAGGED.

meet at noon, adjourn at three o'clock, resume its sittings at five, and sit the agenda out. It would seem that human ingenuity could not hit upon a more inconvenient hour. It is true the dinner-hour was much earlier then. But dinner would not be ready in ordinary households between three and five in the afternoon. The arrangement lasted only for two Sessions, the House in 1835 going back to the four o'clock arrangement.

Disraeli did not enter the House till this experiment had been dead for two Sessions. It must have been familiar to him, and was probably the germ of the scheme of morning Sessions invented by him and established in 1867. Here the hours were more sanely selected, the House now, as then, meeting at two o'clock on Tuesdays and Fridays when morning sittings are appointed, the sitting being suspended between seven o'clock and nine. The Wednesday sitting does not date farther back than 1845. Up to that date the sittings

on Wednesdays were fixed for the evening, like other days. In that year it was ordered that the House should, on Wednesdays, meet at noon, rising at six.

The familiar story of the barrister who acquired a habit of fingering a particular button when he was pleading, and lost the thread of his discourse when the button was secretly cut off, finds no parallel in the House of Commons. But whilst in no case is mannerism of the kind marked to exaggerated extent, some members have certain tricks of action more or less indispensable to successful speech. Mr. Gladstone's gestures, like his other resources, were infinite. At one time—it was during the fever heat of the turbulent Parliament of 1880-85—he fell into a habit of emphasising his points either by beating his clenched fist into the open palm of his left hand, or violently thumping the harmless box with open right hand. This last trick was recurrence to an earlier manner, observation of which drew from Disraeli an expression of heartfelt thanksgiving that so substantial a piece of furniture as the table of the House of Commons separated him from the right hon. gentleman.

The exercise occasionally became so violent that the very point he desired to force on the attention of his audience was lost in the clamour of collision. Mr. Gladstone was, of course, unconscious of this habit, as he was of another trick, manœuvred by stretching his right arm to its full length, rigidly extending his fingers and lightly scratching the top of his head with his thumb-nail.

The Premier's colleagues on the Treasury Bench were so perturbed by the fisticuffing, which frequently gave cause to the enemy to guffaw, that they proposed among themselves that one of them should delicately call his attention to the matter. The proposal was pleasing, but who was to bell the cat? After fruitless discussion of this question in the inner camp, the Dean of Windsor, an old personal friend of Mr. Gladstone's, was meanly approached and induced to undertake

the task. I do not know how the mission fared. Its curative effects were certainly not permanent.

Sir William Harcourt, while addressing the House of Commons, has a persuasive habit of lightly swinging his eye-glasses suspended from an outstretched forefinger. He also, when occasion arises, ^{Some Others.} thumps the box with mailed fist. When he fires a heavy

shot into the opposite camp he revolves swiftly on his heel, looking to right and left of the benches behind him in jubilant response to the cheers that applaud his success. Mr. Arthur Balfour, whose always growing perfection of Parliamentary debate sloughs off tricks of manner, is still sometimes seen holding on to himself with both hands by the lapels of his coat, apparently afraid that otherwise he might run away before his speech was ended. A similar fancy is suggested by Mr. Goschen's trick of feeling himself over, especially in the neigh-

AUTOMATIC GESTURES.—1. SIR WILLIAM
HARCOURT.

bourhood of the ribs. Finding he is all right (on the spot, so to speak), he proceeds to wash his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water.

Even more apologetic in manner when delivering an excellent speech is Mr. Lecky. If he had chanced to be born, like another Irish member long since departed, without arms or legs, he would be a much more effective debater.

As it is there are arms and legs, even of exceptional length, and Mr. Lecky, whilst discoursing on high themes of politics, painfully conscious of their presence, mutely apologises for their intrusion.

Lord George Hamilton explaining away Chitral campaigns, or other awkward things, with swift action and painful precision rearranges the pages of his MS. notes. Using both hands to move a sheet off the box on to the table, he straightway, with equally anxious care, returns it. Sheets of paper have an irresistible fascination for the Secretary of State for India. Seated on the Treasury Bench following the debate, he occupies himself hour after hour in folding notepaper into strips, refolding them lengthwise, and tearing them up in square inches. If his life, or even his office, depended on the mathematical accuracy of the square, he could not devote more time to its achievement.

Sir John Gorst, leaning an elbow on the box, turns his head slowly to the left, then to the right, as if he were

expecting the entrance upon the scene of the corporate body of that mystic entity the Committee of Council. Lord Rosebery is a more marked offender than Sir John in the matter of the almost fatally ineffective habit of leaning an elbow on the table whilst addressing the House. In the Lords the effect is more disastrous, since neither Ministers nor ex - Ministers have anything corresponding to the historic boxes on the table

AUTOMATIC GESTURES—II. SIR JOHN GORST.

of the House of Commons. Sir John Gorst, falling into this attitude, has not to stoop lower than the height of the box. Lord Rosebery, lounging at the table of the House

AUTOMATIC GESTURES—III. LORD SALISBURY.

of Lords, is fain considerably to stoop, an attitude not attractive in itself or conducive to effective speaking. But then Lord Rosebery's speech, whether in the House of Lords or elsewhere, is so precious and so welcome it does not matter how he chooses to stand in the act of delivery.

Lord Salisbury has no gestures when he gets up to speak, but he makes up for the deficiency before he rises. It is easy to know when he intends to take part in a current debate. If he does, his right leg, crossed over his left knee, will be observed jogging at a pace equivalent to ten miles an hour on a level track. The working of this curious piece of machinery seems indispensable to the framing of the exquisitely pungent, perfectly-phrased sentences presently to be spoken without the assistance of written notes.

Of all the tricks attendant upon speech in Parliament, the late Mr. Whalley, long time member for Peterborough, practised the strangest and the most inexplicable. Whenever he rose to speak, and he was frequently on his legs when the Jesuits or the non-believers in the Tichborne Claimant were to the fore, he thrice tapped with the knuckles of his right hand the bench before him. What this might portend, whether it was in the nature of an incantation or invocation, I cannot say. I can only testify that, during the Parliament that met in 1874 and was dissolved in 1880, Mr. Whalley sat on the second bench behind the Opposition Leader immediately under my box in the Press Gallery. I closely watched for the uncanny movement, and never once saw him rise without the preliminary of this weird signal.

*The Mystery
of
Mr. Whalley.*

Sir Algernon West in his *Recollections* says: "When on the retirement of Mr. Denison from the Speakership of the House of Commons in 1872, Mr. Disraeli was told that Mr. Gladstone had selected Mr. Brand as his successor, he said, 'I daresay he is a very good man, but I don't happen ever to have seen him.'"

A moment's reflection will show that unless Disraeli is assumed to have told a deliberate and purposeless falsehood, this rumour cannot be true. At the time of his election to

the Chair, Mr. Brand had held a seat in the House of Commons for twenty years. For nine, from 1859 to 1868, he was chief Whip of the Liberal Party. Concurrently Mr. Disraeli was in succession Chancellor of the Exchequer, Prime Minister, and Leader of the House. To suppose the Leader of the House of Commons "didn't happen ever to have seen" the Opposition Whip, one of whose duties is to march up to the Table with the other tellers on big party divisions, is too great a strain on credulity.

It is, however, true that when the present Speaker's name came to the front, as the Government nominee for the

A dark Horse. Chair vacated by Mr. Peel, there were many members who would have been nonplussed if they had been called upon to pick him out. I remember,

"DO YOU KNOW HIM?"
"NO! DO YOU?"

shortly after his election, Mr. Arthur Balfour telling me that, at dinner on the evening of the day authoritative notice was published of intention to nominate Mr. Gully for the Chair, Mr. Chamberlain asked him what sort of a man the candidate was. Mr. Balfour was obliged to admit that as far as he knew he had never set eyes upon him, Mr. Chamberlain confessing to a similar state of ignorance.

There is a well-known case of an Irish member in the 1880 Parliament, observing the precaution of posting to his

local paper the full text of a speech he intended to make on a particular night. He failed to catch the Speaker's eye. But his speech duly appeared, to the delight and pride of his constituents, richly lined with notes of "cheers," "much laughter," and "loud cheers."

There is nothing new under the sun. A similar accident befell another and a greater Irishman. It was otherwise notable for the fact that it led to Thackeray's ^{Thackeray's} first appearance in print. It befell when he was ^{first} "Pome." a lad, some fifteen years old, staying with his stepfather, Major Smyth, who, turning his sword into a ploughshare, settled down as a gentleman farmer in Devonshire. Ottery St. Mary is the name of the district in the matter-of-fact *Postal Guide*. Later, in a work of even greater circulation, it became famous as Clavering St. Mary, "the little old town" in which Pendennis was born.

It happened that Lalor Sheil, the Irish orator, proposed to advocate the policy of emancipation at a mass meeting on Penenden Heath, in Kent. When he presented himself to deliver his discourse there burst forth an outcry that prevented a sentence being heard beyond the limits of the cart on which he stood. Happily he had observed the precaution before leaving town of sending to the morning papers a copy of his projected speech. Accordingly, though unspoken at Penenden, it appeared in the morning newspapers in verbatim form.

Boy Thackeray thus described the incident :—

He strove to speak, but the men of Kent
Began a grievous shouting ;
When out of the waggon the little man went
And put a stop to his spouting.

"What though these heretics heard me not,"
Quoth he to his friend Canonical,
"My speech is safe in the *Times*, I wot,
And eke in the *Morning Chronicle*."

At best, Lalor Sheil was not equipped by Nature for the difficult task of addressing a mass meeting out of doors.

Mr. Gladstone, who heard many of his speeches, and had a profound admiration for his eloquence, described his voice as "resembling the sound of a tin kettle beaten about from place to place."

There is a curious note of heredity in the fact that his kinsman and successor in the House of Commons, Mr. Edward Sheil, was equally weak in the matter of voice. Once he managed to deliver a long speech without sound of voice.

He acted as Whip to the Party, a post for which he had the prime qualification of being popular on both sides of the House. As Whip, he was not expected to contribute to the campaign of speech-making carried on by his colleagues with a view to obstructing public business. As a rule he availed himself of his privilege, remaining a silent spectator of the fun.

One night, after prolonged sitting, when the ordinary contributors to speech-making from the Irish side were worn out, Mr. Sheil gallantly undertook to hold the field whilst his comrades had a brief rest. He rose from the third bench below the gangway on the Opposition side. The Speaker had called him; he was in possession of the House, and members turned with languid interest to hear what he might have to say.

A dead silence fell over the Chamber. Members looking more closely to see why Mr. Sheil had not commenced his speech observed that his lips were moving. Also, from time to time, he with outstretched arm enforced by gesture a point he thought he had made. But not a whisper escaped his lips. After a while members beginning to enter into the fun of the thing cried, "Hear! hear!" Thus encouraged, Mr. Sheil's oratorical action became more forcible and frequent, but never a sound from his lips was heard. The scene went on for fully a quarter of an hour, amid rapturous cheering from the delighted House, Mr. Sheil resuming his seat with the air of a man who felt he had spoken to the point.

Among Lord Granville's papers (when are we to have

his Memoirs?) will be found a letter written to him by the late Lord Stanhope, dated from "Chevening, October 1866." Lord Granville had recently come into the office, more prized than the Foreign Seal, of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. The late Lord Stanhope was born almost within the precincts of Walmer Castle, Mr. Pitt, then Lord Warden, having on their marriage lent his father and mother the cottage which stands close to the entrance of the Castle grounds from the village side. As one familiar with Walmer Castle in the time of Pitt and the Duke of Wellington, Lord Granville asked Earl Stanhope to give him a few notes on the subject, a task cheerfully undertaken by the historian and genially accomplished.

One of the distinctions of Walmer Castle is that on a treeless coast its grounds are umbrageous. It was Pitt who planted the trees, though he did not live long enough to sit under their shade. Pitt, with all the Castle wherein to choose, selected a curious room as his own. He might have had one facing either the sea or the south. His room to this day looks into the moat, and is faced by the dead wall that guards it. For more than thirty years the room was left exactly as it was when Pitt lay down in it for the last time. The Queen and Prince Consort spent a portion of their honeymoon at Walmer Castle. In anticipation of the event a new dining-room was contrived by knocking down the wall of Pitt's room and joining it to the next one. When the young couple left the wall was rebuilt, and to-day Pitt's room is—or was in Lord Dufferin's day when I was a guest at the Castle—the *habitat* of the housekeeper.

Long before her time the room had quite another occupant. Lord Stanhope, in the letter quoted from, says: "Wellington told me that when he received a visit from Prince Talleyrand at Walmer Castle, Talleyrand asked particularly to occupy Mr. Pitt's room, and seemed to live there in some sense of triumph. His idea was that he had been treated rather slightly by Mr. Pitt when he came

over as secretary to M. Chacevelin in 1792, and that to sleep in his rival's bed was like taking a *revanche*."

That is, perhaps, rather a fanciful conclusion. In the circumstances Pitt's profounder sleep was not likely to be

TALLEYRAND SLEEPING IN PITT'S BED.

disturbed by reflection on the fact that Talleyrand was tucking himself up in his old bed at Walmer Castle.

The room in which the Duke of Wellington slept and died has not since been occupied by any lesser mortal.

The Duke of Wellington's Room. Thanks to the loyalty and liberality of Mr. W. H. Smith, it has been reinstated in something

like the condition in which the Duke left it. In matter of proportions and outlook it is not much better than Pitt's. It is furnished with the stern simplicity of a camp.

When Mr. W. H. Smith was nominated to the Lord Wardenship in succession to Pitt, Wellington, Palmerston, and Lord Granville, he found that the fixings of Walmer Castle, memorials of the daily life of the mighty dead, did not pertain to the Castle. They were "taken over" like ordinary fixtures, by successive tenants, upon payment of their valuation.

Lord Palmerston, when he became Lord Warden, did not want the Duke of Wellington's boots or his bedstead. Nor was he disposed to fork out £5 for the quaint-looking chair in which Pitt often sat astride meditating on Napoleon's triumphal march through Europe. The priceless relics were accordingly distributed.

Happily the present Duke of Wellington obtained all pertaining to his father, and liberally joined Mr. W. H. Smith in reinstating them. Things seem a little out of joint when we reflect that the dispersal of these historic relics took place under the *régime* of the blue-blooded aristocrat Viscount Palmerston, and that their restoration was painstakingly accomplished by a tradesman from the Strand, W.C.

In the smoking-room of the House of Commons there is a simple device whereby is spelled out the names of members as they successively address the House. "Name! Just as in travelling on the District Railway the Name!" name of the approaching station is displayed and stands in view till the point is passed, so whilst a member is on his legs in the House of Commons his name is shining over the fireplace of the smoking-room as if he were Bovril or Vinolia soap.

This arrangement is so convenient that it might well be extended. It would be of especial use in the Central Lobby, where members drop out for a chat whilst Mr. Caldwell or Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett is on his legs. That is all very well, but it may happen that either of these gentlemen is succeeded by a member whose speech one would not like to miss. The danger would be averted if at some convenient point in the Lobby the names of speakers were set forth as they are in the smoking-room.

I have been much struck by an observation contributed by a well-known Irishman to a conversation upon the qualifications necessary for an Irish member. A Definition.

"There are," said he, "three classes of people from

whom the Irish member may be best recruited. Millionaires, who can afford it ; paupers, who have nothing to lose ; and fools of all descriptions."

An Englishman must not say things of that kind. An Irishman may, and does.

CHAPTER XXVII

APRIL

PRESIDING during the recess at a lecture delivered at Epsom on "The Parliaments of the Queen," Lord Rosebery offered

Dulness at some re-
Westminster. marks which
were widely discussed.

The lecturer commented on the frequent assumption that, with the lowering of the franchise, the admission of working men members, and the consequent leavening of the aristocratic mass, the standard of the House of Commons in

PRESIDING AT A LECTURE.

the matter of conduct must needs be lowered. He advanced the opinion that the present House of Commons is the best mannered he, with more than a quarter of a century's experience, had known. "In that respect," he added, "it even runs the risk of being described as dull."

Lord Rosebery, assenting to this view, advanced three reasons in explanation of the phenomenon. The first and most original was that the growing concern taken by the public in the work of County Councils has dulled the keen edge of interest formerly attached to Parliamentary proceedings.

A second reason he found in the overpowering majority that exists in the present House of Commons. Thirdly, he noted the withdrawal from the scene of Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Gladstone, and, he might have added, of Mr. John Bright.

The first reason, obviously suggested by Lord Rosebery's patriotic and beneficent personal share in the work of County and District Councils, will not appeal to others with equal force. It falls before a simple test. Do the public in any county or district crowd the auditorium of the council chamber as the Strangers' Galleries of the House of Commons are thronged even on the dullest night? Do the newspapers, whose managers presumably know what the public want, report at any length, or report at all, the proceedings at meetings of the average County Council?

The answer is in the negative. County Councils, doubtless, have created a special interest of their own within local areas. But these do not interfere with the wider range of profounder attention, not only in this country, but through continents peopled by the English-speaking race, which even the dull Parliament of the present epoch commands.

Lord Rosebery goes nearer to the root of the matter when he cites the overpowering majority at the command of Ministers as a reason for prevailing dulness. A **The Wet Blanket of the Majority.** majority which after a slow course of defeats at by-elections still may be counted at 130, leaves no margin for either expectation or surprise. If it happened to be ranged under the Liberal instead of the Conservative flag the case would be different. Mr. Gladstone came into power in 1880 with a majority not much less overpowering than that which acclaimed Lord Salisbury in 1895. Ere the preliminary formality of swearing-in members had been completed the process of disintegration germinated in the Ministerial camp. Before the Session was far advanced Mr. Gladstone several times found himself in a minority, pathetically surrendering the Leadership of the House to Sir Stafford Northcote when motions relating to Mr. Bradlaugh were submitted.

That was the result of instinct and training. Before and

since, Mr. Gladstone suffered melancholy experience of their joint influence. In the Conservative breast, instinct and training work in directly opposite directions. With a majority of 130 there is sore temptation for an able, ambitious man to achieve a reputation for honest independence by occasionally going into the lobby against his leaders. Steps in that direction were, early in the history of the present Parliament, taken by Mr. Bartley, whose cup of bitterness at seeing Mr. Hanbury on the Treasury Bench, himself overlooked, was filled by the withholding of a card of invitation for a State concert—or was it a State ball? Mr. Gedge is not sound on the question of the Lord Chancellor. More than once he has revolted against Mr. Arthur Balfour's connivance with that eminent person's alleged misdoing in the matter of judicial patronage. As for Mr. Tommy Bowles, he is one of the acutest and most unsparing critics of the Government whether in individual capacity, as vendors of private property at good prices to the State, or as a Cabinet dealing with public affairs at home and abroad.

The revolt of the Pigtail party at the opening of the Session of 1898 seemed really threatening. If it had been Mr. Gladstone who had let Talienwan slip through his fingers into the grasp of Russia, and if Mr. Yerburch had, with equal force and authority, voiced the sentiments of a section of the Liberal party, even a majority of 130 would not have saved the Premier from a damaging blow. As it was the storm blew over. Lord Salisbury went his own way, Russia got hers, and when the Opposition, perceiving an opportunity for doing a little business, took a division on a resolution challenging Lord Salisbury's policy in the Far East, lo! Mr. Yerburch and his merry men "were not"—at least, they were not in the Opposition Lobby.

This condition of things, the knowledge that there is no hope in any circumstances of varying it, acts like a wet blanket on the smouldering fires of the House of Commons. It is, I think, the main reason for the state of things Lord Rosebery recognised at Westminster.

A powerful contributory is the great gap created by the disappearance from the lists of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone.

Grievous Mr. Bright can scarcely be said to be known to
Gaps. the present generation of the House of Commons.

His mark upon its record was cut bold and deep before his retirement from office in 1870 on the breakdown of his

Mr. Verburgh.

Mr. Macdonald.

Lord Charles Beresford.

THE PIGTAIL PARTY.

health. Nevertheless, even his silent presence on the Front Bench did much to ennoble the scene.

It is impossible to overrate the declension of interest in the proceedings of the House of Commons consequent on the withdrawal first of Mr. Disraeli, then, long after, of Mr. Gladstone. It was not only because of their commanding position. They were always on view, as much a part and parcel of the proceedings as the Mace on the Table or the Speaker in the Chair. Both, brought up in an old Parliamentary school whose traditions are now disregarded, observed the injunction that a Leader of the House, whether in office or Opposition, should sit out a debate, however immaterial

its issue or inconsiderable the class of speakers carrying it on. The influence of this personal habit was widely marked. Colleagues on either Front Bench were ashamed to spend the evening in their room or on the Terrace when the chief was patiently keeping watch and ward. Above and below the gangway on either side the example had its influence. However dreary might be the current debate, there was Disraeli to watch, with his right leg crossed over his knee, his arms folded, his head bent, his eyes, bright to the last, closely watching the benches before him, especially that on which Mr. Gladstone sat.

Since he went away there was Mr. Gladstone, a much more animated object. The essential difference between the two statesmen was nowhere more strongly marked than in their bearing in the House of Commons. For hours Disraeli sat motionless as the Sphinx. The only colleague he habitually conversed with on the Treasury Bench was a Junior Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Barrington, whose agreeable duties in this and another way recorded were rewarded by an English peerage. Mr. Gladstone, bubbling over with vitality, talked to whomsoever might chance to sit on his right hand or his left, often emphasising conversation with quick gesture of nervous hands.

Whether silent or conversing, these two were the cynosure of all eyes. Their presence denoted possibility of their at any moment interposing and lifting drear debate to the level of their own stature. There are in the present Parliament no two men—there is not any one man—who possesses this personal fascination. It necessarily follows that, field nights apart, the House of Commons is from hour to hour through its nightly sittings less interesting than it was when both or one of these historic figures was still above the horizon.

How many members of the House of Commons elected in the first year of the Queen's reign survive to-day? Having occasion in the Diamond Jubilee year to look the matter up, I found there were at that date six.

**Survivors of
the Queen's
first Parliament.**

Of the half-dozen one was Mr. Leader, who represented Westminster in the first Parliament of the Queen, and distinguished himself by being one of the minority of twenty who supported that once well-known, now forgotten, statesman, Mr. Coroner Wakley, in an amendment to the Address. The Ministry, avowedly Liberal, had omitted from the Queen's Speech promise to undertake Parliamentary reform. The Coroner with professional energy forthwith proceeded to sit upon the Government. He found only eighteen members to follow the lead of himself and co-teller in what might be construed as a rudeness to the young Queen whose first Speech was nominally the subject of debate.

Other of the six relics of this House of more than sixty years ago were Mr. Hurst, in 1837 member for Horsham; Mr. Wentworth-Fitzwilliam, member for Malton, now Earl Fitzwilliam; Sir Thomas Acland, member for West Somerset, whose family name was up to a recent date honourably represented in the House of Commons by the ex-Vice-President of the Council; Mr. Villiers, in 1897 as he was in 1837 member for Wolverhampton; and Mr. Gladstone, at the Jubilee period in busy seclusion at Hawarden, in 1837 member for Newark, having his days before him and the tumult of his life.

Three of these veterans—Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Villiers, and Sir Thomas Acland—have since gone over to the majority, and I fancy I have seen record of the passing away of one other.

At a time when the Government of the day lie under grave charges of mismanagement of a campaign, it is interesting to come upon some criticism of Lord Wolseley dealing with an analogous state of things. Some years ago there was issued a book, written by Colonel Campbell, entitled *Letters from Camp during the Siege of Sebastopol*. Lord Wolseley wrote a preface in which, commenting on the sufferings of the troops in the Crimea, he declared that they "had their origin in the folly, criminal ignorance, parsimony,

History
repeating
itself.

and inaptitude of the gentlemen who were Her Majesty's Ministers."

According to some authorities, it requires only to write the verb in the present tense in order to describe the earliest relations of Her Majesty's Ministers with the campaign in South Africa.

In a passage that has even fuller possibility of significance, the principal military adviser of Lord Salisbury's Government, alluding to "the crass ignorance of the Cabinet," protests it was "equalled only by the baseness with which it afterwards endeavoured to shift the blame from its own shoulders upon those of Sir R. Airey and other military authorities."

Lord Edward Pelham-Clinton, Master of the Queen's Household,

Threat of full
Disclosure. bitterly resents this passage as a direct indictment

HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF.

From Punch, August 1856, after the Crimean War.

ment of his father, the late Duke of Newcastle, whom history holds to be the Minister chiefly responsible for the conduct of the Crimean War. That is but a filial reflex of the frame of mind with which the Duke himself met charges and insinuations levelled against him. It is something more than a tradition in the Pelham-Clinton family that the Duke of Newcastle was deliberately made the scapegoat of the Cabinet. Whilst the storm raged he wrote a letter to Hayward, in which the following ominous passage occurs: "I do not know whether justice will be done me, but if not, I shall publish everything and spare nobody."

I believe the Duke's Memoirs, upon which the labour of years has been bestowed, are in a forward state. This threat on the part of the aggravated Duke promises that they will cast a new, perhaps an amazing, light on the inner history of Ministerial direction for the Crimean War and the responsibility for its criminal blunders.

There is another memoir of a much greater statesman the world would welcome. I allude to the *Life of Lord Randolph Churchill*. That he contemplated its being undertaken appears on unquestioned authority. He made his will in the summer of 1883. No reference to the subject appears in the body of the document. Five years later, on the 22nd of September 1888, he added a codicil whereby he bequeathed all his private papers, letters, and documents to his brother-in-law Viscount Curzon and his old friend Louis Jennings, M.P., "in trust to publish, retain all or any of them, as they in their absolute discretion may think proper."

When the will was opened poor Louis Jennings, whose open rupture with his much-loved friend and leader was one of the most dramatic incidents ever witnessed in the House of Commons, lay in his grave. Had he survived his chief, there is little doubt the book would have been written. Lord Curzon's many gifts do not tend in the direction of literary effort. But there is obviously a substitute at hand. As a rule biographies written by sons or daughters are a failure. The nearness of the point of vision makes impossible the effect of perspective. Sir George Trevelyan's *Life of Lord Macaulay* appears to suggest that the standpoint of a nephew is the nearest at which biographical faculty may be successfully undertaken. But Mr. Winston Churchill has on more than one occasion testified to possession of the gift of self-detachment which, as enabling one dispassionately to adjudge intimate friends or near relations, was a prominent endowment of his distinguished father.

A skilful record of the career of Lord Randolph Churchill, a selection from his correspondence, and a study of his brilliant wayward personality, would make a peerless book. To produce it is a duty the son owes to the memory of his father.¹

Black Rod and the Serjeant-at-Arms in the House of Lords this Session tread the floor of the historic chamber

¹ In 1902 announcement was made that Mr. Winston Churchill had undertaken the task.

with secret consciousness that they have achieved a great victory over that enemy of Ministerial mankind,

**Domestic
Differences in
High Quarters.**

the Treasury. Thirteen years ago an Act of Parliament was passed requiring that all Government officials should contribute 10 per cent of their salary towards a superannuation fund. Up to a recent period the staff of both Houses of Parliament escaped this impost. The Treasury, beginning to feel the burden imposed upon them by the generosity of a Government who have devoted millions to the subvention of Church schools, the relief of the clergy, and the amelioration of the lot of rate-paying landlords, felt they must do something to raise the wind. A

BLACK ROD.

little more than a year ago a vacancy arose in the office of Serjeant-at-Arms in attendance on the Lord Chancellor at the House of Lords. Here was a chance of readjusting the balance.

Scarcely was General Sir Arthur Ellis installed in his new office than he received intimation from the Treasury that his salary would be docked to the amount of 10 per cent. There happened to be sitting a Select Committee to consider the whole question of the officers of the House of Lords, whom jealous commoners had criticised as being in number far beyond the needs of the institution, and, therefore, entailing unnecessary expense. To this Committee General Ellis carried the Treasury communication. The Committee wrote to the Treasury promising to take the matter into consideration. That was in December 1898, and there, in accordance with precedence, it seemed probable the matter would rest. The Committee would go on indefinitely "considering" the matter, and in the meanwhile the Serjeant-at-Arms would continue to draw his full salary.

Therein the Committee counted too confidently on human

frailty, a weakness from which the Treasury is free. In June last My Lords woke up to recollection that no answer on the point had been forthcoming from the Select Committee. A note was accordingly written, referring to the correspondence in December, and stating that "My Lords would be glad to be favoured with the views of the Committee on the question." The Clerk of Parliaments replied that the office of Serjeant-at-Arms is a Royal Household appointment, and that no deduction is ever made from the salaries of such officers. By way of clincher it was added that Black Rod, also a Household appointment, had never had such claim made upon him. The Clerk of Parliaments was so delighted with this illustration of his case that he airily remarked: "It therefore seems hardly necessary to bring the matter before the House of Lords' Officers' Committee."

As on an historic occasion Lord Randolph Churchill

"forgot Goschen," so, in this

delightful domestic

comedy, the Clerk

of Parliaments "for-

got Hanbury." Hitherto the

correspondence on behalf of

the Treasury was conducted

by Lord Salisbury's friend,

the Permanent Secretary, Sir

Francis Mowatt. Now a

greater than he stepped to

the front. A burlier figure

filled the breach. Mr. Han-

bury himself took the business

in hand, and dealt a blow

which (of course, in a Parlia-

mentary sense) doubled up

the Clerk of Parliaments. The

Serjeant-at-Arms, he pointed

out, draws his salary from the

House of Lords' Vote in the

MR. HANBURY TAKES THE BUSINESS
IN HAND.

capacity of an officer serving in that House, not as a House-

A Daniel
came to
Judgment.

hold officer paid from the Civil List. *Argal*, he must stump up a tithe of his salary.

That was very well as meeting the argument about the Serjeant-at-Arms. It was the next move that revealed the dangerous proclivities of Mr. Hanbury, trained, in company with Mr. "Tommy" Bowles and Mr. Christopher Trout Bartley, in the close conflict of Committee of Supply. "You point out," he blandly added, "that no such abatement has ever been made in the case of successive holders of the office of Black Rod, which is equally a Household appointment. But here, too, the emoluments are drawn not from the Civil List, but from the House of Lords' Vote, and now that their attention has been drawn to the matter, My Lords cannot avoid the same conclusion as that reached with regard to the Serjeant-at-Arms."

Here was a nice pickle! Not only was the Treasury implacable in the matter of 10 per cent on the salary of the Serjeant-at-Arms, but was now full cry in pursuit of similar plunder from Black Rod. What that august functionary said when he heard of the Clerk of Parliaments' ingenious argument on behalf of the Serjeant-at-Arms is happily withheld from public consideration.



PURSUED BY THE TREASURY.

As for the Clerk of Parliaments, he meekly replied that he would lay both cases before the Select Committee, as requested by Mr. Hanbury. Fortunately for Black Rod and the Serjeant-at-Arms, the Select Committee, being a corporate body, did not suffer from the personal apprehension that naturally took possession of the individual when the Clerk of Parliaments was temporarily deprived of breath in the circumstance described. You cannot frame an indictment

against a whole nation, neither can a Financial Secretary to the Treasury, albeit 6 ft. 6 in. in height, grind the faces of a whole Select Committee. The Lords' Committee, accordingly, safely locked in their room, signed a sort of round-robin, oracularly declaring that "as the Treasury Rules derive their validity from the Superannuation Act, which does not apply to the staff of either House of Parliament, the alleged statutory obligation to make the proposed reduction does not really exist."

Thus was a rapacious Treasury defeated, and thus it comes to pass that from this Session onward Black Rod and Serjeant-at-Arms will draw their full salary, none daring to make them afraid of a 10 per cent reduction.

CHAPTER XXVIII

MAY

"THIS sitting up merely to adjourn the House and to put out the lights is not only useless as a matter of business, but it really impedes business, knocks up the ^{Hard Lines} Speaker, and renders him inefficient for the ^{for the Speaker.} following day." Thus Speaker Denison, writing in his Diary, under date Friday, 25th of March 1870. The anguished words were wrung from him at the close of a hard week chiefly spent in the Chair. To ordinary business people it seems necessary only to state the case to have the absurdity corrected.

When the House gets into Committee of Supply the Speaker leaves the Chair, the proceedings being thereafter presided over by the Chairman of Ways and Means, seated at the table. As a rule, on these occasions the Speaker is relieved between four and five o'clock, and, as the Committee will peg away till the hour of adjournment, the right hon. gentleman might reasonably count upon a restful evening, getting early to bed. It is,

MR. J. W. LOWTHER, THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

however, an ancient custom that the formality of adjourning the House shall be performed by the Speaker in person. The consequence is that, when at midnight Committee of Supply closes, the Speaker is routed out of his house, compelled to put on wig and gown, return to the Chair, and, having recited the list of orders on the paper, observes, "The House will now adjourn."

As a rule the performance does not take more than five minutes. But consider the inconvenience it imposes—imprisonment at home throughout the evening and compulsory sitting up to midnight.

That the Chairman of Ways and Means can accomplish the ceremony without weakening the foundations of the Empire is proved by the fact that on the occasional indisposition of the Speaker he is called upon to do so. On the very night this anguished cry was wrung from the soul of Mr. Speaker Denison he had settled with Mr. Dodson, then Chairman of Ways and Means, that he should take the Chair and adjourn the House. "He did so. No inconvenience arose to any one. But the relief to me was very great. I got to bed and to sleep about eleven o'clock and had a good night, which quite restored my powers."

Since John Evelyn Denison finally left the Chair of the House of Commons the deeply rooted prejudice against reform of Parliamentary procedure has been dug up with beneficial results. But this useless weed still cumpers the ground.

Fourteen years have sped since Joseph Cowen¹ shook the dust of the House of Commons from off his feet and retired to his hermitage at Blaydon-on-Tyne.

Joe Cowen. The period is not long in history, but the effect of such lapse of time upon the *personnel* of the House of Commons is striking. There are few public bodies of equal number in which the outward drain is so strong and steady. I doubt whether there are in the present Parliament a hundred men who sat in the same House as Joseph Cowen

¹ Died 1900.

Yet his memory still lingers over the historic scene, and to the very few admitted to his close friendship the memory of his rare personality will ever smell sweet and blossom in the dust. News of his death came as a personal blow in both political camps.

There is no position in public life Cowen might not have achieved had he devoted himself to the pursuit. His splendid intellectual gifts were trained by constant study. Endowed with a far-reaching and tenacious memory, he remembered most things he read, and he read everything. As an orator of the classic style he was unsurpassed in the House of Commons. His was the antique manner, which consisted of making speeches as contrasted with debating.

THE HERMIT OF BLAYDON-ON-TYNE.

He rarely took part in the give-and-take of Committee work. When the nation throbbed with excitement in face of a great political crisis Cowen rose to its height, his splendid oratory dominating a breathless audience. His speech on the Empress of India Bill, and one in support of the Vote of Credit moved in 1878, when Russia was reported to be at the gates of Constantinople, will never be forgotten by those who heard them. They had undoubtedly been elaborately prepared, and were, I believe, actually recited from memory. But there was about them no smell of the midnight lamp. The picturesque figure with its strangely-fashioned garments, the strong Northumbrian burr into which his voice lapsed when he was deeply stirred, were adjuncts rather than drawbacks to the perfectness of the achievement.

Cowen was as gentle-hearted as the tenderest of women, a feature which did not wholly comprise his kinship with the other sex. Oddly enough, in view of his ways of life, he was not free from personal vanity, and was implacable where it had once been affronted. How Mr. Gladstone stumbled in this connection has been told. Disraeli early noted the strange-looking member for Newcastle, with his home-made clothes and his billy-cock hat. After his speech on the Vote of Credit, Dizzy, with sweet casualness, happened upon Cowen in the same division lobby where Gladstone had unconsciously snubbed him. He fell into conversation with him, extolled his speech, and made a valuable friend.

Though Cowen's manner was almost childlike in simplicity, and his shyness sometimes embarrassing to others, as

well as to himself, he was one of the keenest-sighted, ^{The} "Newcastle Chronicle." shrewdest men of business

born to canny Northumberland. His dealings with the *Newcastle Chronicle* illustrate two sides of his character. His proprietorial connection with the paper was purely accidental, and, to begin with, as unwelcome as it was unpremeditated. An earlier proprietor found difficulty in making both ends meet. In such circumstances he followed the not unfamiliar course of going for help and counsel to Joe Cowen. From time to time loans were made without leading to permanent re-establishment. In the end



A SHADOW OF THE PAST.

Cowen was obliged to take the paper on his own back. Having come into absolute possession he brought to bear upon the concern his intuitive knowledge of affairs, his shrewd common-sense, his trained business habits. In a very few years the *Newcastle Chronicle* reached the position

it still deservedly holds as one of the most influential and, I should say, one of the wealthiest newspapers in the provinces.

During the greater part of the time he sat in the House of Commons Cowen nightly transmitted by telegraph to his journal a London Letter luminous with political insight and knowledge of affairs. He wrote nearly as well as he spoke, but in quite a different style. He was as severely simple when he had pen in hand as he was ornate when on his legs, addressing crowded audiences either at Westminster or from a provincial platform.

Wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice, I doubt whether Cowen spent £200 a year strictly on himself. His charities were boundless, though, so far as I know, his ^{His particular} name never figured in the advertised list of ^{Friends.} public subscriptions. Struggling nationalities in any part of

THE CONSPIRATORS OF EUROPE.

the world commanded not only his sympathy but his purse. One night in the lobby of the House of Commons Cowen

was having what he dearly loved, a gossip with intimate friends. The conversation turned upon some severe process just instituted by order of the Czar against certain students in St. Petersburg. Cowen talked of them by name, and gave some particulars of their private history.

"I believe," said Sir Wilfrid Lawson, one of the group, "that Cowen knows every conspirator in Europe."

"Yes," said A. M. Sullivan, with whose chivalrous nature Cowen had much in common, "and he maintains half of them."

Under date Christmas Day, 1897, Cowen wrote to me a letter, in which there is an interesting personal note on his

oratory :—
 "Tranquil
 Indiffer-
 entism."

"I am glad you were pleased with my remarks at the Jubilee banquet. My object in handing you the little pamphlet was to give you a synopsis of my views on national affairs, and not a specimen of my mediocre gifts of expression. I think we agree generally on the trend of events, but your friendship leads you to over-estimate my literary and speaking capacity. I have few of the attributes of a genuine orator—enthusiasm, imagination, and bursts of fiery words. All I aspire to is a clear and terse exposition of principles and facts. I am too imperfectly endowed with the ordinary incentives that move men in public life—the yearning for applause or the desire of power. A kind of tranquil indifferentism deprives me of the oratorical skill to please, conciliate, or persuade. But I have drifted into an unpardonably lugubrious and personal strain quite out of keeping with this festive season."

The pamphlet alluded to is a reprint of a speech delivered by Cowen at the Diamond Jubilee celebration in Newcastle-

The sound of a
 voice that is
 still.

upon-Tyne. I quote a passage illustrating his oratorical style and testifying to the lofty spirit of sane Imperialism of which Cowen was an apostle long before it became the cult of to-day. As a piece of glowing eloquence it is worth preserving :—

"There have been empires which have covered a large area, and some which have possessed a greater population,

but there have been none at once so dissimilar and yet so correlative, so scattered and yet so cohesive, as that of Great Britain. There have been races who have rivalled us in refinement, but none in practical ability. Greece excelled us in the arts of an elegant imagination. But she was more ingenious than profound, more brilliant than solid. Rome was great in war, in government, and in law. She intersected Europe with public works, and her eagled legions extorted universal obedience. But her wealth was the plunder of the world ; ours is the product of industry.

“The city states of ancient, and the free towns of mediæval, times aimed more at commerce than conquest. Wherever a ship could sail or a colony be planted their adventurous citizens penetrated, but they sought trade more than territory. Phœnicia turned all the lines of current traffic towards herself. But she preferred the pleasant abodes of Lebanon and the sunlit quays of Tyre to organising an empire. Arms had no part in her growth, war no share in her greatness. Carthage, which, for a time, counterbalanced Rome, robbed the ocean of half its mysteries and more than half its terrors, but she did little to melt down racial antipathies. Venice in the zenith of her strength gathered a halo round her name which the rolling ages cannot dissipate. Holland, by her alliance of commerce and liberty, sailed from obscurity into the world’s regard. Spain and Portugal drew untold treasure within their coffers, but its possession did not conduce to national virtue.

“None of these States, with their diverse qualities and defects, had imperial aspirations, except Spain. Most of them were only magnified municipalities. But the volume and value of their trade, although large for the time, was meagre when compared with ours. British wealth is unparalleled in commercial history. Add Carthage to Tyre, or Amsterdam to Venice, and you would not make another London. All things precious and useful, amusing and intoxicating, are sucked into its markets. But mercantile success, although it implies the possession of self-reliance and self-control, of caution and daring, of discipline and enterprise,

if unaccompanied by more elevated impulses, will not sustain a State. Wealth is essential. It must not, however, be wealth simply, but wealth plus patriotism. It is by the mingling of the material with the ideal, the aspiring with the utilitarian, that the British people have secured their influence and elasticity.

“These qualities have enabled them to dot the surface of the globe with their possessions, to rule with success old nations of every race and creed, and civilise new lands of every kind and clime.”

The Estimates of the year carry the charges for the Queen's yacht, launched in January after earlier disaster.

The Queen's Yachts. This brings the Queen's private “navee” up to five ships, for their tonnage and speed certainly the costliest fleet in the world. The Queen's first yacht, now reduced to the status of a tender, was built more than fifty years ago. She cost, to begin with, over £6000. That does not seem much ; but it was only to begin with. Some years ago, when the question was discussed in Committee of the House of Commons, it was stated that, taking into account repairs alone, not mentioning maintenance, the little *Elfin* had cost £500 a ton. Effective contrast was made by quotation of analogous expenditure upon one of the stateliest ironclads of the day. It was shown that after an equal term of public service in all seas the man-of-war cost but £80 a ton.

Next in point of age comes the *Victoria and Albert*, built at Pembroke in 1855. Her original cost was £176,820. Again, apart from wages of the crew and supply of stores, she has, on the average, cost the nation £12,000 a year, which starts her, including original cost, well on the way to three-quarters of a million sterling. Third in seniority is the *Alberta*, built in 1863, followed by the *Osborne*, a fine ship of 1850 tons. She cost £134,000, and expenditure upon her in the way of repairs and decorations is estimated at £8000 a year—nearly as much as the Lord Chancellor costs.

Mr. Asquith was Secretary of State for the Home Department for a period of three years. It is, I believe, one of his most pleasant reminiscences that, dealing with successive cases, he took off an aggregate period of forty years' penal servitude allotted to prisoners by a single judge.¹ Among friends and personal acquaintances the judge in question is known as a simple-mannered, kind-hearted man, brimming over with humour and loving-kindness. On the Bench, transformed by the covering of wig and gown, he is pitiless.

Dies Irae.

I hear on unquestioned authority a striking illustration of this paradox. Frequently after having passed one of those sentences that call forth strong remonstrance in the Press, his lordship has been known privately to visit the convict, conversing with him or her in the most beautiful, brotherly manner, displaying the keenest interest in the spiritual opportunities of the prisoner.

DIES IRAE.

That is nice and kind. On the whole, it may be presumed that the convict would prefer the conversation to have taken another turn on the Bench, reducing a term of penal servitude by from three to five years.

To the casual observer Sir Grant Duff has neither the air nor the manner of a *raconteur*. The publication of his Diary proves afresh how untrustworthy are his appearances. His volumes—and we are only at the beginning of an illimitable series—are full of good things. I once heard him tell a story I do not find in his Diary. He claimed for it the mark of respectability, as it is founded upon fact. During the First Napoleon's

"Hey Ho! and a Bottle of Rum."

¹ Mr. Justice Day.

campaign in Egypt a Rear-Admiral attached to the British Fleet, watching the General's operations, died at sea. With his last breath he expressed the wish that his body might be sent home for burial. Considering the appliances at command of the doctors that seemed an injunction impossible to obey. To some one occurred the happy thought that if the

"THE ADMIRAL'S RUM."

body were enclosed in a vessel containing spirits it might be safely transported.

The late Admiral was accordingly nailed up in a hogshead of rum, which was transhipped to a frigate going home with despatches. On arrival of the ship at Portsmouth the cask was broached, and with the exception of the corpse it was found to be empty.

Some of the crew, scenting rum and knowing of nothing else, brought a gimlet into play and, subtly inserting straws in the aperture, drank the Admiral dry.

This suggested to Sir Wilfrid Lawson, seated at the same dinner-table, another story. It is located in Westmorland, and must be true because Sir Wilfrid lives in the adjoining county. Two neighbours were talking over the recent death of a farmer slightly known to both. A matter
of Course.

“Did he die of drink?” asked one.

“Well,” said the other, “I never heard to the contrary.”

CHAPTER XXIX

JUNE

EHEU fugaces! Five years ago this very month of June Lord Rosebery's Government was blown out of office by a cordite explosion in the House of Commons.

How they
brought the
news to
Gothenburg.

It chanced that on the night this befell, Mr. Gladstone and a considerable number of members of the last Parliament in which he sat were far away from Westminster. They had gone to attend the opening of the Kiel Canal, and were homeward bound when the momentous news was flashed under sea. The *Tantallon Castle*, with Mr. Gladstone and other members of either House on board, was at Gothenburg when the telegram came. It was in fragmentary form, and so oddly mixed up with announcement made on the same evening by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman that the Duke of Cambridge had been induced to retire from the post of Commander-in-Chief, that defeat of the Government seemed a consequential event.

That a Government having got rid of the Duke should straightway get rid of itself was explicable only on the principle of the Japanese hari-kari. However, that was all we could make out in Gothenburg, and we had to possess our souls in patience till the *Tantallon Castle* slowed up off Gravesend, and Sir Donald Currie's agent came on board with an armful of newspapers:

There was a tremendous rush for them by the passengers, only Mr. Gladstone appearing indifferent. For more than

A CORDITE EXPLOSION.

UNION

NO. 1000
MAY 10 1900

sixty years he had lived in the vortex of public life. Now, whether Ministries stood or fell, whether Parliaments were dissolved or went their way, was a matter of minor interest to him. Of much more moment was his study of the Danish language undertaken since, ten days earlier, the *Tantallon Castle* slowly crept out of the foggy Thames into the open sea. It was with difficulty Mr. Gladstone could be made to select a journal from the heap. He walked off with it under his arm with an almost bored look upon his face. In the cabin men were thronging round any so fortunate to have an open newspaper in his hand. For Mr. Gladstone the news would keep till he got to his state cabin.

Another echo from Westminster that reached the *Tantallon Castle*, this earlier time at anchor at Kiel, related to the statue of Oliver Cromwell, a subject of animated debate in the House of Commons. Mr. Herbert Glad- Oliver
Cromwell. stone, in 1895 First Commissioner of Works, submitted with the Civil Service Estimates a small sum on account of erecting a statue to the Lord Protector within the precincts of Parliament. It was hotly opposed by Mr. Justin M'Carthy, then leading the Irish Nationalist Party.

As Mr. Arthur Balfour was reminded last February when his own First Commissioner of Works was charged with having found a public site for a Cromwell statue, the Irish members five years ago received powerful support from the then Leader of the Opposition and his followers. So effective was the onslaught that, the vote having been carried by a bare majority, the Government hastily abandoned the project, not to be revived till Mr. Balfour and the gentle-

THE CROMWELL STATUE.

men who conscientiously voted against it in 1895 came into power.

At Kiel the late Speaker, Lord Peel, came on board the *Tantallon Castle* to pay his respects to Mr. Gladstone. They had not met for some time. The air was electrical with the buzzing of great events at home and on the Continent.

"And what do you think he talked about?" Lord Peel asked me when he left the state room where Mr. Gladstone had for fully ten minutes been earnestly conversing. "Why! about Oliver Cromwell."

At the luncheon-table the same day Mr. Gladstone was still full of the subject. "I am not sure," he said, "that if I had been in the House I should have voted with Herbert for the statue. I admit that Cromwell was one of the biggest men who wielded power in this country. Never actually King, no crowned monarch has exceeded the measure of his autocracy. The blot on his character I can never overlook or forgive was the Irish massacres. I hold that the Irish members were fully justified in their opposition to the vote."

In the interesting speech in which Mr. Balfour this year justified what five years ago he had hotly and indignantly denounced he spoke disrespectfully of Carlyle's monumental work on Cromwell. In this view he was at one with Mr. Gladstone. "Carlyle's Cromwell," said the old man eloquent, "is a piece of pure fetichism."

The Terrace of the House of Commons maintains its favour in the eyes of London Society. It certainly has many claims to pre-eminence in that field. **Trees for the Terrace.** It is secluded, though accessible. The scene up and down the river, with Lambeth Palace flooded in the light of the setting sun, is exceedingly beautiful. Some of the men, sitting at tables, strolling about, or leaning on the wall of the Terrace, bear the best-known names in England. Moreover, for ladies, wives and daughters of members or their bosom friends, there is, whilst they sip tea and toy with strawberries, a certain subtle conscious-

ness that they are, in degree, assisting at the making of laws and of history. At the very moment they, with tea-cup extended towards the hostess, are saying, "Thank you ; only one piece, please," Mr. Caldwell may be addressing a crowded House from above the gangway, or that infant Roscius of the Parliamentary stage, Mr. W. Redmond, may be thundering defiance from below it.

For womankind the attractions of the situation are, quite unintentionally, increased by a certain stern, not to say aggressive, line of demarcation. Just as boating on the Thames you come at some quiet spot upon a half-submerged post (generally on the slant) displaying the legend "Danger," so at the eastward end of the Terrace, near the main entrance, upstands a board bearing the strange device, "For members only."

THE INFANT ROSCIUS—
MR. W. REDMOND.

No female footstep, however small the imprint, may pass the line marked by this symbol of man's exclusiveness. Here, in haughty solitude, sit the Benedicts of the House of Commons, Colonel Mark Lockwood, Colonel Saunderson, and the like—men who hold that there is a place for everything and that everybody, especially woman, should be in her place.

It was this spirit of exclusiveness that led to the adoption of what is known as the new staircase. Visitors to Benares will remember how on walking down any of the passages to the Ganges leading to the ghats, the natives fresh from their bath in the holy river shrink back against the wall, lest by accident they should suffer contamination by touch even of the hem of the garment of the unbeliever. In unconscious development of this feeling, a section of members accustomed to frequent the guarded inclosure, complained of obstruction on the staircase leading

A New
Staircase.

from the Terrace to the corridors and lobbies of the House. Going or coming about the business of the State they were, they complained, hampered by women, who always walked in the middle of the staircase, showing no inclination to "make a gangway."

It was hoped that this objection being pressed would result in the closing against women of this approach to the Terrace. So it did. But the authorities of the House, being all married men, were constrained to meet the difficulty with due regard to the rights of woman. This was done by the costly expedient of making a new staircase, by which cavalier members now escort the fair guests whom they have invited to tea on the Terrace.

This has an unforeseen advantage. Not only does it land the ladies on the scene at a spot distant from the male inclosure, which it is undesirable further to allude to, but it brings them in closer contiguity to the peers. The western and bleaker end of the long promenade is the patrimony of the peers. They may an' they please—a few do—secure a table in advance, and take tea in solitary dignity. Or they may give little tea parties of their own, just as if they were commoners. As a matter of fact, noble lords frequenting the Terrace at tea-time prefer to join tables set at the liveliest end of the Terrace.

One exception to this rule made memorable the ordinary Session of last year. All of a summer afternoon the Lord High Chancellor was observed presiding at a tea-table round which clustered a dream of fair women. He did not wear his wig and gown, but nothing else was lacking to the grace and dignity with which he managed the large brown tea-pot necessitated by the breadth of his hospitality.

There is one possible and appropriate addition to the attractiveness of the Terrace as a summer evening lounge for tired legislators so obvious, that it is a marvel it has been overlooked. Why should not the long, unlovely length of the flagged pavement be broken up by pots and tubs of flowering shrubs? The resources of Kew Gardens are not exhausted. At trifling expense Sir T.

**The Peers'
Portion.**

**Why not
Trees?**

Thistleton Dyer, being duly authorised, could make the Terrace of the House of Commons blossom like the rose. The balustrade overlooking the river seems created for the special purpose of showing how fair are the flowers that bloom in Kew Gardens. On the terraces and by the hall

THE LORD CHANCELLOR WIELDING THE TEA-POT.

doors of country houses it is a common thing to see masses of colour over-topping big vases. Why should the terrace of the town house of the legislator be left forlorn?

Like the quality of mercy, such a display of foliage and colour overlooking London's greatest highway would be twice blessed, blessing those privileged to frequent the Terrace and those who, passing up and down the river in penny steamers, longingly look on.

There lie hidden to-day in a muniment room in Victoria Tower, Westminster, a collection of historical documents whose personal history is not less romantic than Unconsidered Trifles. the narratives they record. When, in 1834, fire broke out in the old Palace of Westminster, one of the officers of the House of Lords bethought him of certain bundles of musty papers dumped down in an ancient annex.

Tradition handed down to the staff the impression that these documents were exceedingly valuable, which to the official mind fully accounted for their being hidden away in a cellar. The officer made gallant and successful efforts to save them. Being rescued they straightway fell into their old condition of disregard. While the new Houses of Parliament were being built the bundles were shifted about from shed to shed to suit the convenience of the workmen. When the building was completed the hapless treasure-trove was carted into the basement story of the offices of the House of Lords, which, running parallel with the river at something below its level, was recognised as the very place in which to store precious papers.

More than a quarter of a century later a gentleman engaged upon an historical work asked permission to make search in the House of Lords for any papers bearing upon the subject. He was courteously let loose in this river cellar, and had not been there many days before he discovered a veritable Klondike of papers relating in intimate fashion to some of the most critical and interesting epochs in English history, dating from 1479 to 1664.

In his *History of the Rebellion*—meaning the establishment of the Commonwealth—Lord Clarendon, writing of Naseby fight, reports how “in the end the King was compelled to quit the field, and to leave Fairfax master of all his foot, cannons, and baggage, amongst which was his own cabinet, where his most secret papers were, and letters between the Queen and him.” Here, among these unconsidered bundles, treated for centuries as if they had been dirty linen, lay *perdues* these love-letters passing between the hapless King and his wife Henrietta, whose portraits, limned by the hand of Vandyck, adorned through dark days of the past winter the walls of Burlington House.

The Love-
Letters of a
King and
Queen.

The Puritans, with malicious intent, printed and circulated these letters, just as, after the Tuileries was sacked, the correspondence of Napoleon III. and the Empress, found in private chambers, was given to the greedy mob. The French

Imperial fugitives did not come so well out of the ordeal as do their seventeenth century predecessors. Charles I. was a bad King, but these letters, lately rescued out of the abyss of centuries, show him in a gentle light. The Queen is equally tender in the dark hour of adversity. Both write in cipher, the secret of which was not withheld from the prying eyes of the Puritans, whose transcript of the letters now lies hidden from the world in the solitude of Victoria Tower.

CHARLES I. AND HENRIETTA MARIA.

Queen Henrietta uses the olden French familiar to the readers of Montaigne's Essays. Writing on the 16th of January 1643, "au Roy Mon Seigneur," from an unnamed place, she says (being translated) :—

My dear Heart, I made an account to depart yesterday, but the winds were so boisterous that my goods and luggage could not be sent aboard to-day. Howsoever I hope it will be done to-morrow. If the wind serves I mean to be gone on Thursday, God willing. I have so much unexpected business now upon my departure, which causes me to be extremely troubled with the headache, and to make use of another which I would have done myself, but that I have many letters to write into France. Watt being come thence, I shall only tell you that he hath brought me all that I could desire from thence. Farewell, my dear Heart.

"The King my lord," writing from Oxford, "To my Wyfe, 26 March, 1645, by Sakfield," thus dis- King Charles. courses, with kingly variety of spelling :—

Deare hart, I could not get thy Dispaches wch Petit brought before yesterday wch I red with wonder anufe to fynde thee interpret my letter, marked 16, as if I had not beene well satisfied with some-

thing in thy letter by Pooly. I confess that I expressed anger in that letter, but it was by complaining to thee not of thee, and indeed when I am accused of concealing my Affaires from thee either by negligence or worse I cannot bee well pleased and though I am behoulding to thy love for not believing I am not the more obliged to my accusers' goodwills ; albeit the effects thereof (by thy kyndeness) is most welcome to mee, and certainly I know nothing less in thy power than to make me be displeased with thee : I have beene and am seldom other then angry with myselfe for not expressing my Affection to thee according to my intentions. So far have I alwais beene from taking anything vnkyndly of thee ; as for my desyring thee to keepe my Dispatches it was in particular and not in generall conserning those of Irland, not knowing whether thou thought secrecy in that business so requisit as I know it to be, for many ar of that nature as ar fitt to be shoven and wher they ar of an undouted kynde these I confess needs no items ; but where I am not sure of thy concurring opinion there to give thee a causion may show my want of judgemt but not of confidence in thee : In a word, Sweet hart, I cannot be other than kynde to thee and confident of thee ; and say what thou will thou must and does know this to be trew of him who is eternally Thyne.

Another discovery made among precious lumber stowed in out-of-the-way chambers in the House of Lords was the long-lost MS. Prayer-Book sent to the peers by Charles II., to assist them in compiling the Prayer-Book. The volume has a curious history. During the Commonwealth an order was issued abolishing the Book of Common Prayer. One of the first proceedings of Charles II. on the restoration of the monarchy was to appoint a commission to "Review the Book of Common Prayer, comparing the same with the most ancient liturgies which have been used in the Church in the primitive and purest times, and to prepare such alterations and additions as they thought fit to offer." When Parliament passed an Act re-establishing the Church this MS. volume was ordered to be appended thereto.

This condition was observed, and up to the beginning of the century the documents remained intact. One day a clergyman asked and obtained permission to consult the MS. Prayer-Book on a doctrinal point that perturbed his soul,

The boon was granted by a sympathetic Black Rod. But, alack ! the temptation, greater than any resisted by St. Anthony, proved too much for the holy man. Soon after he had departed it was found the precious volume had also gone. Nothing was heard of it for many years. Whether pricked by conscience the rev. gentleman voluntarily returned the book, or whether, tracked to his sanctum, it was rescued from his felonious grasp, does not appear in the loosely kept records of the day. It is, however, certain that by the year 1819 it was restored. There is record that it was seen and handled in 1824. After the burning of the Houses of Parliament ineffective search was made for it. Some twenty-seven years ago, it being found that the Old Tower at the back of Abingdon Street was inconveniently stuffed with old Acts of Parliament, they were removed to Victoria Tower. Amongst them was found this priceless MS., which has again relapsed into the condition of the forgotten.

Surely an honourable place might be found for it in the manuscript-room of the British Museum, where, albeit through a glass darkly, we might see its face.

There is an elder, even more historic, Prayer-Book still amissing. When in the fifth and sixth year of his reign Edward VI. caused to be passed a statute **King Edward's** establishing the Protestant religion throughout **Prayer-Book.** his realm, it was ordered that the Book of Common Prayer, concurrently compiled, should be "annexed and joined to this present statute." The precedent was, as we have seen, followed in the reign of Charles II. with equally calamitous results.

When, in 1661, Charles II.'s Commissioners came to look for this Prayer-Book it was nowhere to be found. There was the original statute duly preserved, but the Prayer-Book had disappeared. There is on record a letter from John Browne, the Clerk of the Parliament in 1683, addressed to one of his colleagues, wherein he writes : " In Q. Marie's tyme the Common Praier Booke which was annexed to the Act was taken away."

The first body of Royal Commissioners on historical

MS. (amongst the few survivors are Lord Salisbury and Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) were of opinion that this thrice-precious MS. would some day be found amongst the medley of MSS. judiciously housed in the basement story of the offices of the House of Lords. Has it been found, or has the matter been forgotten in the pressure of business that weighs upon the peers?

CHAPTER XXX

JULY

ONE of the characteristics of the House of Commons that endear it to the student of manners is its absolute freedom from snobbishness. It is no respecter of persons. Trojan and Tyrean are one to it. ^{The House of Commons.} What it likes above all things is a man of capacity, of simple manner, with the gift of conveying information and argument in lucid speech. Whether he be born heir to a peerage, or whether he passed some years of early life in a coal mine, affects its judgment only in the direction of securing more indulgent attention to one of the latter class.

It is human and English to the extent that, at the bottom of its heart, it loves a lord. But if strained imagination may go the length of conjuring a stupid man bearing a lordly title, his attempts at engaging its favourable attention would not meet with greater success than if his father had been a tailor. The case of Lord Randolph Churchill illustrates the situation. Undoubtedly the fact that his father was a duke gave him a favourable opening. Had he failed to seize and make the most of it, an armful of dukes would not have helped him. Had he come of a line of tradesmen he would, perhaps a little more slowly, but inevitably, have reached the position he eventually won in the House of Commons.

One of the most successful speeches of the present Session was delivered by a Welsh member who, according

to his own modest record, set forth in the pages of "Dod," served as a schoolmaster in Wales, and, coming to London, became assistant master in a Board School, finally advancing to a tutorship at Oxford. Yet Mr. William Jones, unexpectedly interposing in debate on the question of the establishment of a Catholic University in Dublin, instantly commanded the attention of the House, which, filling as he went on, sat in the attitude of entranced attention familiar in moments when it was addressed by John Bright or Mr. Gladstone.

The secret of this rare triumph is that Mr. Jones very rarely interposes in debate; that he knows what he is talking about; that his lips are touched with the fire of that eloquence possible only to the Celt; that his manner is modest almost to the verge of timidity. There are men who would barter coronets or great wealth for the reception spontaneously accorded to the unassuming

**A WELSH ORATOR,
MR. WILLIAM JONES, M.P.**

Welsh schoolmaster. In the House of Commons neither rank nor money could purchase it.

Many people are familiar with a description of the personal appearance of Mr. Gladstone in his earliest days in the House of Commons without knowing the source of its origin. "Mr. Gladstone's appearance and manners," it was written in the Session of 1838, "are much in his favour. He is a fine-looking man. He is about the usual height and of good figure. His countenance is mild and pleasant, and has a highly intellectual expression. His eyes are clear and quick, his eyebrows are dark and rather prominent. There is not a dandy in the House but envies what Truefitt would call his fine head of jet-black hair. It is always carefully parted

**An early
Portrait and a
Forecast.**

from the crown downwards to his brow, where it is tastefully shaded. His features are small and regular, and his complexion must be a very unworthy witness if he does not possess an abundant stock of health."

The quotation is from a work entitled *Random Recollections of the Lords and Commons*. It was published in 1838 anonymously, a fortunate arrangement, since it permitted the author that freer scope of description and criticism that makes his work precious to succeeding generations. I have the good-fortune to possess a copy of the first edition in its old-fashioned, paper-boarded covers. Looking up the familiar quotation, the only passage of the book that survives in current literature, it is amusing to find this shrewd observer's estimate of the possibilities of the young member for Newark.

"He is," wrote Mr. James Grant—there is no secret now about the authorship of the work—"a man of very considerable talent, but has nothing approaching to genius. His abilities are much more the result of an excellent education and of mature study than of any prodigality on the part of Nature in the distribution of her mental gifts. I have no idea that he will ever acquire the reputation of a great statesman. His views are not sufficiently profound or enlarged for that. . . . He is plausible even when most in error. When it suits himself or his party he can apply himself with the strictest closeness to the real point at issue; when to evade that point is deemed most politic no man can wander from it more widely."

That last passage is excellent. Written more than sixty years ago, it exactly describes Mr. Gladstone's Parliamentary practice up to the date of his final appearance at the table.

Mr. Grant, I believe, lived long enough to see his early judgment of Mr. Gladstone's capabilities falsified. Prophecy-
ing before he knew, he had, however, the satis- **Pitt's Malden**
faction of erring in distinguished company. **Speech.**

George Selwyn heard Pitt's first speech in the House of Commons, and, writing to Lord Carlisle, under date 13th June 1781, he says, "I heard yesterday young Pitt; I came

down into the House to judge for myself. He is a young man who will undoubtedly make his way in the world by his abilities. But to give him credit for being very extraordinary upon what I heard yesterday would be absurd. If the oration had been pronounced equally well by a young man whose name was not of the same renown, and if the matter and expression had come without that prejudice, all which could have been said was that he was a sensible and promising young man."

"The Earl of Rosebery has an aversion which nothing but some powerful consideration can overcome to take any active part in great national questions. He
Lord
Rosebery. acquits himself in his addresses to the House in a very respectable manner. He speaks with great emphasis, as if every sentence he uttered were the result of deep conviction. The earnestness of his manner always ensures him an attentive hearing, and adds much to the effect of what he says. His speeches usually indicate an acquaintance with their subject. His elocution would be considered good were it not that its effect is impaired by his very peculiar voice—so peculiar that I know not how to describe it. All I can say respecting it is that a person who has once heard it will never forget it.

"He always speaks with sufficient loudness to be audible in all parts of the House. He seldom falters, and still more rarely hesitates for want of suitable phraseology. His language is in good taste, without being polished. His addresses never extend to any length, but they are comprehensive. There is generally as much matter-of-fact or argument in them as a more wordy speaker would swell out to double the extent.

"His action requires but little notice. He is a quiet speaker. His body stands nearly as still as if he were transfixed. He now and then moves both hands at once just as if he were waving them to some friend he recognised at a distance.

"The noble Earl is slightly below the middle height,

with a moderate inclination to corpulency. His complexion partakes more of sallowness than of any other quality I could name. His hair has something of a greyish colour. In the features of his face there is nothing peculiar. He looks a good-natured man, and I believe he is so in reality. He is in his fifty-fifth year."

If he were alive now he would be in his 117th. As the reader, misled by the opening sentence, would begin to suspect, this pen-and-ink sketch does not refer to the Earl of Rosebery who fills so large and luminous a space in the closing years of the Victorian era. It was his grandfather, the fourth Earl, who sat in the first Parliament of the Queen, and in succeeding ones up to the year 1868. The sketch, penned in 1838, is taken from the same lively volume that enshrines the more familiar portrait of young William Ewart Gladstone.

Lord Ashbourne is not only a charming after-dinner speaker himself, but was at least on one evening the cause of a *tour de force* in after-dinner speaking by another. On the occasion alluded to Lord Ashbourne was, as he often is, a host in himself. The dinner was given at the United Service Club, to welcome

An After-
dinner
Speech.

POST-PRANDIAL HUMOUR.

LORD ASHBOURNE AND MR. CHAUNCEY DEPEW.

Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, on one of those not infrequent visits to London with which he tempers the exile of Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid. The Marquis of Londonderry

sat on Lord Ashbourne's right, and next to him Mr. Chauncey Depew.

It was a small and purely social dinner amongst old friends, and nothing was remoter from expectation than speech - making.

When the servants left the room, to every one's surprise the host rose to propose a toast to the health of the Marquis of Londonderry and Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid.

I never saw a man so annoyed as was Lord Londonderry. He had come out for a pleasant evening, and here was thrust upon him

the burden of after-dinner speech-making. If coals had suddenly gone down half-a-crown a ton his countenance could not have more nearly resembled their colour. Drummond Wolff, on the contrary, was quite elate. A charming after-dinner speaker, he welcomed this unexpected opportunity of displaying his talent.

Lord Ashbourne went on for some time, expatiating on the high qualities of Lord Londonderry, and extolling the diplomatic talent of Drummond Wolff. "With your permission," he added, in an abruptly concluding sentence, "I will call upon Mr. Chauncey Depew to respond to the toast."

The surprise was complete, not least for Chauncey

Depew. But in a moment he was on his legs, and made response which for wit and appropriateness could not have been exceeded by an ordinary man with the advantage of a week's preparation.

The Speaker of the House of Commons is the custodian of great traditions. He might as reasonably be expected to appear in the Chair without wig and gown as to countenance at his official table guests ^{Free and Easy.} who wore not the wedding garment. Mr. Peel's kindly instincts and hospitable intent on one occasion got over the difficulty. In supplement to his Wednesday evening banquets, when members cluster round him in Court dress, he gave a non-official dinner at which—as in quite other circumstances at Lord Onslow's charming dinners in Richmond Terrace—it was optional for guests to present themselves either in morning or evening dress. There were thirty-six present, twelve representing in the House of Commons Labour constituencies. Each of these was sandwiched between two other members of the House, and a most delightful evening was spent.

Among the Welsh members was the gentleman known in the Principality as "Mabon." Some one suggested that the honourable member could sing. "Mabon" blushed assent. The Speaker's pleasure being taken, "Mabon" rose to his feet and trolled forth a lightsome Welsh ditty.

"MABON."

In the dining-room at Speaker's House three centuries of Speakers look down from the walls on the more or less festive dinner-scene.

What they thought of this particular occasion is, for obvious reasons, not recorded.

I wonder how many members of the present House know that within the last half century there were two forms of **Protestants and Catholics.** oath—one for the Protestant, one for the Roman Catholic? Mr. Gladstone remembered the scene in the House of Commons on a November day in 1837, when the newly-elected Parliament was sworn in. Then, as now, the performance was hastened by carrying it on in batches. As many members as could manage clustering together to touch the Bible repeated the oath in chorus.

I gathered from Mr. Gladstone's story that in those days members repeated the oath aloud. When opposition to Roman Catholics enjoying full civil rights was at length overcome—Pitt, it will be remembered, was, after strenuous effort, beaten on the point by that eminent statesman George III.—Protestants insisted upon retention of the privilege of denouncing Roman Catholics in the oath of allegiance taken at the Table of the House of Commons. It was, Mr. Gladstone said, a most uncompromising performance, Roman Catholics being described as idolaters destined to everlasting perdition.

What engraved the circumstance on the tablets of his memory, legible after an interval of sixty years, was that at a table adjoining that at which the young member for Newark and a dozen other stalwart Protestants were vigorously cursing their Catholic colleagues stood Daniel O'Connell, quietly taking the form of oath prepared for members of his faith.

"He could not fail," said Mr. Gladstone, "to have heard the chorus of our charitable performance."

There are few things in a small way more irritating to members of the House of Commons than the censorship **Sub-editing Questions.** their questions undergo at the hands of the clerks at the Table. It is a wholesome restriction that the manuscript of all questions addressed to Ministers shall be handed in at the Table. They are read,

usually by the second clerk, and sent on to the printer, sometimes with serious emendations. It is a common occurrence for members, especially gentlemen from Ireland, to make public complaint on submitting their question that its text has been so manipulated as to have lost its point. That is to say, in inquiring about delay in delivery of letters at Clonakilty or Ballymahooly, the Clerk at the Table has struck out a broad hint that the Minister to whom the question is addressed was guiltily cognizant of the secret of the sudden death of a connection on his wife's side.

So deeply rooted is the feeling of resentment at tampering with literary work to whose composition a full hour may have been devoted, that this Session a member so little given to revolt as Mr. Kimber came in contact with the authority of the Chair by insistence on the reinstatement of the original text of his question. In this case there was no wanton and groundless insinuation of foul play suffered by a mother-in-law. The Clerk at the Table thought some passages were irrelevant and struck them out. Mr. Kimber complained that the first intimation of the matter he received was when he opened his copy of the Orders and found his prize prose-poem of a question reduced to baldest limits. He attempted to graft upon the stem of his remarks the suppressed cutting, so that the House might judge between him and the Clerk at the Table. The Speaker was down on him like a thunderbolt, frustrating a familiar device.

In this particular case the Speaker admitted that he had not been made aware of drastic dealing with the manuscript. But, according to his constant ruling, he peremptorily declined to permit discussion of the procedure at the Table or repetition of the words struck out of the question. Mr. Kimber was compelled to accept the changeling which bore his name in the list of questions, though, as he dolefully said, he was not able to recognise it.

Mr. Gully is equal to all occasions, and met this unexpected outburst with his accustomed firmness and urbanity. As a rule he is warned beforehand of anything in the wind by the simple process of a conference which precedes each

sitting of the House. On every day the House meets the
Preparing for
a Sitting. clerks at the Table have an audience of the
 Speaker. They draw his attention to any point
 of order likely to be raised in the course of the forthcoming

THE SPEAKER RIDING ON THE WHIRLWIND.

sitting. The situation is discussed, precedents are looked up, and when the whirlwind rises the Speaker is prepared to ride upon it.

The Earl of Onslow holds exceptional position in Parliament by reason of the fact that two of his ancestors became
Double
Honours. Speakers of the House of Commons. That is a matter of public record. There is another, less familiar, fact which establishes the unique position of the Under Secretary for the India Office. Twice has he moved the Address in the House of Lords.

The first occasion was the 5th of February 1880, the principal topics of the Queen's Speech having reference to the capture and deposition of Cetewayo and the Afghan

invasion after the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari. The second time was on the 19th of August 1886, Parliament having met immediately after the General Election that smashed Home Rule and sent the Liberal Party into the wilderness. On that occasion the noble Earl was able to approve the decision announced in the Queen's Speech, that in view of the date Her Majesty abstained from recommending for the consideration of Parliament any measures save those essential to the conduct of the public service during the remainder of the year.

Invitation to move or second the Address in either House is a compliment highly prized. How it came about that it should be thus lavished upon an individual is not explained. Lord Onslow modestly surmises that Lord Salisbury forgot the honour had already been bestowed upon him. It is equally reasonable to suppose that the Premier cherished such pleased recollections of the glowing eloquence of the speech on the 5th February 1880, that, like a person who shall here be nameless, he in August 1886 "asked for more."

CHAPTER XXXI

AUGUST

AN institution which from time to time loomed large and ominously in Parliamentary debate has ceased to exist.

Jenkins in the Commons. Whenever Sir John Gorst wanted to make flesh creep in the House of Commons he was accustomed to allude to the Committee of Council on

Education. The mere writing or printing of the phrase will to the unaccustomed ear convey no idea of its effect when uttered by the Vice-President. It was generally evoked when any awkward question arose in debate or conversation on educational matters. The House learned to know when Sir John was coming to it. He leaned his elbow a little more heavily

SIR JOHN GORST: "I WANT TO MAKE
YOUR FLESH CREEP."

on the brass-bound box. His countenance was softened by a reverential look. His voice sank to the sort of whisper you sometimes hear in church. Then came the slowly accentuated syllables—the Committee of the Council on Education.

Nobody except Sir John knew of whom the Committee was composed, what it did, or where it sat. That only made its influence the greater, the citation of its name the more thrilling. Its function in connection with National Education was to shut up persistent inquirers and ward off inconvenient criticism or demand. It is an old device, certainly going as far back as the days of David Copperfield. The Committee of Council on Education played the part of Jorkins to the Vice-President's Spenlow. He would be ready—nay, was anxious—to concede anything demanded. But there was the Committee of the Council on Education. That, he was afraid, would prove inexorable, though at the same time he would not neglect an opportunity of bringing the matter under its notice.

The Committee of Council on Education is dead and buried. It ceased to exist by an amendment of the Education Act which, frivolous-minded people will recognise, appropriately came into operation on the 1st of April. But, as in the case of the grave of the faithful lovers, "out of his bosom there grew a wild briar and out of her bosom a rose," so from the sepulchre of the Committee of Council on Education has grown another body with another name. I believe it is actually composed of the same persons, including the President of the Council, the First Lord of the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the principal Secretaries of State. Diligently following the example of its predecessor it never meets, nor is it ever consulted on matters connected with education.

THE LAY OF THE LAST V.-P.

By the wanton change of name the spell woven about its

predecessor is broken. A potent influence for good is withdrawn from the House of Commons. The blow personally dealt at Sir John Gorst is in the worst sense of the word stunning. Mercifully the Act recognises the impossibility of the situation. Having abolished the Committee of Council on Education, it also makes an end of the Vice-President. Sir John will retain his title and his office through what remains of the life of the present Administration. With its close a page will be turned over, and the House of Commons will know no more the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education.

Looking through Lewes's *Life of Goethe*, I come upon a letter written by Thackeray forty-five years ago, in which he describes a visit to the Grand Old Man of Weimar. Mr. Gladstone's eyes. "His eyes," he writes, "were extraordinarily dark, piercing, and brilliant. I felt quite afraid before them, and recollect comparing them to the eyes of the hero of a certain romance, called *Melmoth the Wanderer*, which used to alarm us boys thirty years ago—eyes of an individual who had made a bargain with a certain person, and at an extreme old age retained these eyes in all their awful splendour."

Not less a prominent feature in a striking countenance were Mr. Gladstone's eyes. They were the most deeply luminous, the most fearfully flashing, I ever saw in a human face. Like every one else who came in contact with him, Mr. Lecky was much struck by the phenomenon. In a notable passage written by way of preface to a new edition of his *Democracy and Liberty* he writes: "He had a wonderful eye—a bird-of-prey eye—fierce, luminous, and restless.

A FLASHING EYE.

'When he differed from you,' a great friend and admirer of his once said to me, 'there were moments when he would give you a glance as if he would stab you to the

heart.' There was something indeed in his eye in which more than one experienced judge saw dangerous symptoms of possible insanity. Its piercing glance added greatly to his eloquence, and was, no doubt, one of the chief elements of that strong personal magnetism which he undoubtedly possessed. Its power was, I believe, partly due to a rare physical peculiarity. Boehm, the sculptor, who was one of the best observers of the human face I have ever known, who saw much of Gladstone and carefully studied him for a bust, was convinced of this. He told me that he was once present when an altercation between him and a Scotch professor took place, and that the latter started up from the table to make an angry reply, when he suddenly stopped as if paralysed or fascinated by the glance of Gladstone; and Boehm noticed that the pupil of Gladstone's eye was visibly dilating, and the eyelid round the whole circle of the eye drawing back, as may be seen in a bird of prey."

No one knowing Mr. Lecky, with his soft voice, his pathetic air of self-effacement, can imagine him saying these bitter things. He did not speak them, yet there they are, as he wrote them in the safe seclusion of his study. The picture is not drawn with effusively

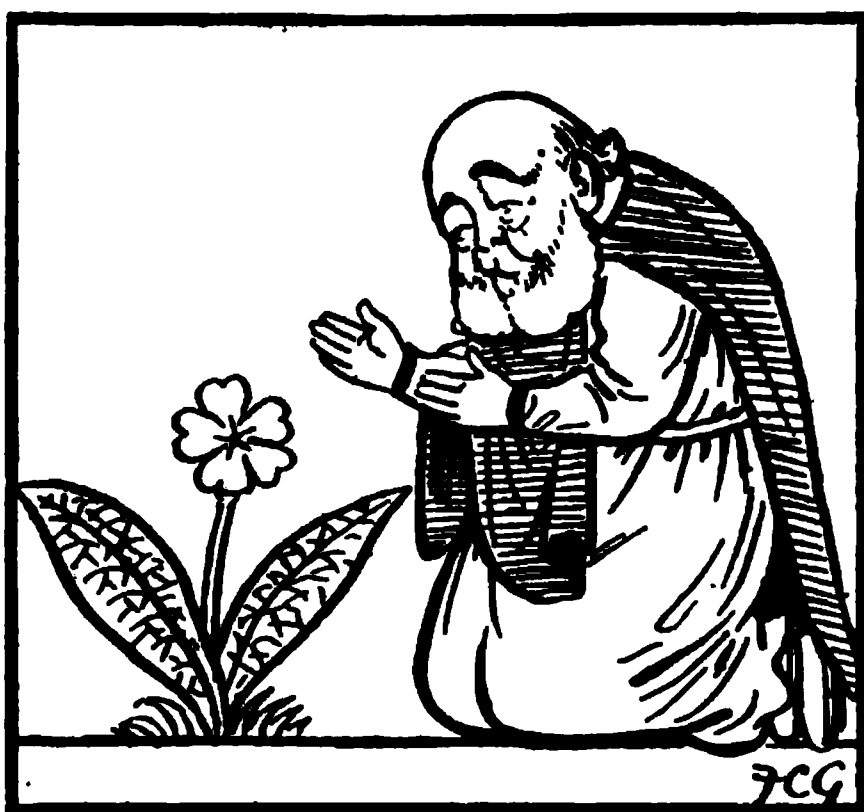
MR. LECKY STRUCK BY A
PHENOMENON.

friendly hand. But no one familiar with Mr. Gladstone in his many moods can deny that there is much veracity in it.

I have never but twice heard Mr. Gladstone speak with personal resentment of men opposed to him in the political arena. I forget the name of one of the subjects of his acrimony, though I have a clear impression that he was a person of no importance. The other is a noisy, frothy, self-seeking member of the present House of Commons. It

was at Dalmeny, during one of the Midlothian campaigns, when the telegraph brought news of this gentleman's re-election, Mr. Gladstone offered an observation in those deep chest notes that marked his access of righteous indignation. Then I saw in his eye that flashing light which Mr. Boehm describes as having shrivelled up the Scotch professor. The expression was by no means uncommon whether he were on his legs in the House of Commons or seated at a dinner-table. But the awful lighting-up of his countenance invariably accompanied not reflections upon individuals, but comment upon some outrage of the high principles, honour and obedience to which were infused in his blood.

In an extra-Parliamentary speech delivered in the course of the Session Lord Salisbury found opportunity of extolling the Primrose League as an instrument of national good. In a gleam of hope he almost saw in it a means of amending and counteracting the inherent weaknesses of the British Constitution. This is interesting



THE CULT OF THE PRIMROSE.

and amusing to those who remember the birth of the Association. I recall a little dinner given by Lord Randolph Churchill at No. 2 Connaught Place, in the early eighties. The company numbered four, including the host, Sir Henry Wolff, and Sir John Gorst. Of the Fourth Party, Sir Henry Wolff was the only one who

had associated himself in the promotion of the new Guild. To Lord Randolph it was an amusing enterprise. I well remember how he chaffed Sir Henry, being backed up by Sir John Gorst.

At that time neither Sir Henry Wolff nor Algernon Borthwick—now Lord Glenesk—had any idea to what proportions the grain of mustard seed they planted would grow. As for Lord Salisbury, who to-day almost drops into poetry in his adulation, it is more than probable that at this time he had never heard of it. If he had, "the image of the housemaid" would certainly have crossed his mind with an application disastrous to the new departure. At the dinner I speak of Sir Henry Wolff laughingly defended himself from the attacks made by his colleagues deprecating serious intention in the matter. He and they lived long enough to see the Primrose League with all its—perhaps because of its—fantastic flummery grow into a political power, crystallising the conservatism latent in the mind of woman, and cunningly directing her influence upon a certain order of male mind. If political services are to be crowned with meet reward, Lord Salisbury ought to make a duke of the man who invented the Primrose League.

There is an accidental point of resemblance and a striking difference in the outset of the careers of Pitt and Gladstone. Both entered the House of Commons as **First Rungs of** representatives of pocket boroughs—Pitt as **the Ladder.** member for Appleby, on the nomination of Sir James Lowther; Gladstone as member for Newark by favour of the Duke of Newcastle. Very early in their career each was offered office. Mr. Gladstone promptly accepted the Junior Lordship of the Treasury, the customary bottom step of the ladder, when in 1834 it was offered him by Sir Robert Peel. Rockingham, forming a Ministry in succession to Lord North, tempted Pitt with something better than that. The young man coolly thrust the prize aside, with the intimation that he was "resolved not to take a subordinate office." The next offer made to him, he being in his twenty-third year, was the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, with the Leadership of the House of Commons.

The nearest parallel in modern times to this leap of a private member into Ministerial office of Cabinet rank is

Mr. Asquith's appointment to the Home Office. But Mr.

MR. ASQUITH JUMPS INTO THE CABINET.

Asquith was in his fortieth year, and had been six years in the House of Commons before he made this great stride.

A member of the French Chamber of Deputies who visited the House of Commons the other day tells me some interesting things about the former. The British Constitution is, among other things, buttressed about by the engagement of a rat-catcher, who cares for Buckingham Palace. His salary is duly set forth in the Civil Service Estimates, is year after year solemnly voted by the House of Commons, and is included in the gigantic amounts set forth in the Appropriation Bill. In France there is also a rat-catcher in the employment and pay of the State. But he is directly engaged in the service of the Chamber of Deputies. His salary is a trifle over £25 a year, which compares favourably with that drawn quarterly by the rat-catcher of Buckingham Palace.

Another of the resources of civilisation the Chamber of Deputies benefits by which finds no parallel in the House of Commons is an umbrella-mender. French legislators finding their umbrellas worn out or damaged by accident may take them to a particular room in the Chamber and have them

repaired gratuitously. This institution dates back to the time of Louis Philippe. That amiable and apprehensive monarch never, even in settled summer weather, went out without an umbrella. He set the fashion of discarding walking-sticks and holding fast to the umbrella. This naturally led to increased mortality in the umbrella-stand, and members of Parliament, properly thinking that observance of a loyal custom should not incur personal charges, brought in the umbrella-mender, and paid him out of taxes.

In the administration of affairs he is now the last link left with the *ancien régime*. Kings have gone. Emperors and Empresses have been *chassés*. The Tuileries is a ruin; the umbrella-mender, a legacy of the time of Louis Philippe, remains.

The annual vote for the current expenses of the French Chamber is about £300,000. This compares with charges on the Civil Service Estimates on account of the The Cost of the Chamber. House of Commons of £150,000. Probably, on the principle which forbids a bird to foul its own nest, the votes on account of the Chamber are usually passed without discussion. But my French friend remembers a variation from the rule. A keen-scented deputy noticed that not only was the charge for scented soap advancing by leaps and bounds, but that the bill for eau-de-Cologne had in a particular Session beaten the record. The influence of temporising friends induced this French Peter Rylands to refrain from opening the question of scented soap. But he was firm about eau-de-Cologne. He moved an amendment reducing the amount of the vote by thirty centimes. That was not much; but the moral rebuke was effective. The expenditure on eau-de-Cologne, a few years ago recklessly rising, forthwith stopped. It is now over £50 a year, but sturdy Republicans do not regard the amount as excessive.

Printing costs the French Chamber about £20,000 a year. The Library, a favourite lounge, spends nearly £1000 a year on new books. It was upon a recent occasion stated, without contradiction, that the money is chiefly expended on works of fiction.

CHAPTER XXXII

NOVEMBER

DID the late Lord Chief-Justice (Lord Russell of Killowen) pass any early portion of his journalistic career in the Press

Russell of Killowen. Gallery of the House of Commons? No mention of the circumstance is made in accessible biographical notes. I have reason to believe that the answer to the question is in the affirmative. Talking one day of his

Parliamentary experience Lord Russell dropped the remark that his first acquaintance with the House of Commons was made from the Press Gallery. I asked when it happened, but he evidently did not desire to pursue a subject he had accidentally alluded to, and talked of something else. The Press Gallery of the

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL, AFTERWARDS LORD RUSSELL OF KILLOWEN.

From a Sketch in the House of Commons.

House of Commons is one of the most exclusive places in the world. It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's

eye than for a man not duly authorised as a working journalist to cross its trebly-guarded portals. Since Russell was there he must have gone either to report speeches or to write leading articles.

One of Lord Russell's most distinguished contemporaries at the Bar certainly gained his earliest personal knowledge of the House of Commons as viewed from the Press Gallery. Forty years ago Sir Edward Clarke was on the regular reporting staff of the *Standard*, possibly not dreaming that in days to come he would give his successors in the old box many an hour's work reporting his Parliamentary speeches.

The great advocate and judge who in August last suddenly passed away, followed by a rare burst of national lamentation, was a striking example of the **Lawyers in the House.** familiar Parliamentary truism that a successful lawyer is not necessarily, is indeed rarely, a power in Parliamentary debate. When twenty years ago Charles Russell in the prime of vigorous life, with high reputation as leader of the Northern Circuit, took his seat for Dundalk, if anyone had been asked what his chances were of making a position in the House of Commons the answer would have been that they were assured. So it proved: Russell, from the position of private member, rising through the Attorney-Generalship to the highest seat on the judicial Bench. But the prize was won by sheer force of personal character, not by oratorical art or debating facility.

Yet Russell was equipped by Nature with all the gifts that ordinarily go to make Parliamentary reputation. A great lawyer, he was not tied and bound by the manner or tradition of the Courts. In addition to a piercing intellect, long training, a ready wit and gift of speech that occasionally rose to height of genuine eloquence, he was a many-sided man of the world. He loved cards and horses, was a constant diner-out, was even frequently seen at the "at homes" which in some big houses follow upon little State dinners. His sympathies were essentially human. He resembled Mr. Gladstone in the quick interest he took in any topic started

in conversation. In short, he seemed to be just the man who would captivate and command the House of Commons. Yet, with one exception, I do not remember his ever attaining a position to reach which was a desire perhaps more warmly cherished than that of presiding over the Queen's Bench Division. The exception was the delivery of a speech in support of the second reading of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill.

The most remarkable episode in Charles Russell's career at the Bar undoubtedly was his defence of Mrs. Maybrick.

Mrs. Maybrick. I happened to find myself in the same hotel with him at Liverpool on the morning of the day set down for the opening of the trial. At breakfast he spoke in confident terms of his client's innocence and of the certainty of her acquittal. He did not take into account the passing mood of the judge who tried the case, and so found himself out of his reckoning. But the verdict of the jury, still less the summing-up of Fitzjames Stephen, did not shake his conviction that, whatever other sins might lie to her charge, the unhappy woman was guiltless of murder.

It was chiefly respect for the conclusion formed by this judicial mind, illumined by the keenest intellect, that led two successive Home Secretaries on accession to office to devote days and nights to patient reconsideration of the evidence. Lord Llandaff told me that when the matter came before him as Home Secretary he approached it with an absolutely impartial mind, biased only by natural desire to find a loophole through which the hapless woman might crawl back to liberty. He read and weighed every scrap of evidence, shutting himself up with the papers for three days. At the end of that time he, slowly but surely drifting, was landed in unshakable

MR. MATTHEWS, NOW LORD
LLANDAFF.

conviction of Mrs. Maybrick's guilt. When Sir Matthew White Ridley went to the Home Office he, in the same impartial frame of mind, moved by the same impulse towards mercy, arrived at the same conclusion.

It is impossible to conceive two men more widely differing in constitution and training than the Home Secretary who was best known as Henry Matthews and the present incumbent of the office, Sir Matthew Ridley. Yet, travelling by varying ways, they arrived at the same conclusion. On the other hand, Charles Russell, of all men least likely to be misled by appearances or deliberate deception, having probed the case to the bottom, having turned his piercing eyes on the frail creature in the dock, having talked to her in private and studied her in public, was convinced of her innocence. He was not the kind of man to abandon man or woman because the universe had deserted them. He paid Mrs. Maybrick regular visits in her prison-house, a custom not intermitted when he put on the ermine and the dignity of Lord Chief-Justice of England.

Lord Mostyn is the proud possessor of the earliest, most comprehensive, and on the whole the most valuable collection of what in these days are widely popular in the provincial Press as London Letters. The London Correspondent, as all who read his contributions suspect, was not born yesterday. Seventeenth
Century
London
Correspondent. The Letters bound in ten volumes that have an honoured place in the library at Mostyn Hall are dated from 1673 to 1692.

At that epoch, whilst as yet newspapers were few, the news-letter-writer was an important person. He attended the coffee-houses, where he picked up the gossip of the day. For Parliamentary news he suborned the clerks, who gave him an inkling of what happened in the House, sometimes even supplied him with extracts from its journal. This practice became so common that there will be found in the journals themselves an account of how certain coffee-house-keepers were summoned to the Bar of the House and

reprimanded for the heinous offence of adding to the attractions of their parlour by publicly reading minutes of the proceedings.

The more enterprising of these early fathers among London correspondents forestalled Baron Reuter. They had correspondents in some of the capitals of Europe who sent them scraps of gossip, which they embodied in their letters. Each letter-writer had his list of subscribers, who, I trust, made up a handsome aggregate of fee. Of the varied topics dealt with in the *Mostyn* news-letters it will suffice to cite notices of Titus Oates standing in the pillory of Tyburn; of Nell Gwynne at the height of her fame; of the execution in Pall Mall of the murderers of Edward Thynne; of the arrest of the Duke of Monmouth; of the trial of the Seven Bishops; of the birth of the Prince of Wales, son of James II.; of the fee of 500 guineas paid to the fortunate midwife, one Mrs. Wilkins; of King James's going, and of the Prince of Orange's coming.

NELL GWYNNE.

The stern forbidding of the Clerks of Parliaments to furnish to the outside world information of what took place within the barred doors of the House of Commons did not extend to members. Stored in ancient houses throughout the country are innumerable more or less graphic panels from pictures in Parliament. One, in the possession of Sir John Trelawney, recalls a curious scene in the House early in the Session of 1753. "Your countryman Sydenham, member for Exeter," writes a fellow-member, addressing his uncle in the country, "wanted a tax on swords and full-bottomed wigs, which last do not amount to forty in the kingdom. The Speaker and the Attorney-

A waggish
Speaker.

General, who were the only wearers of them in the House, made him due reverence."

As the visitor to the Strangers' Gallery knows, the Speaker of the House of Commons to this day wears a full-bottomed wig. The Attorney-General long ago finally took off his.

At Dunster Castle, in Somersetshire, there is a bundle of letters written 140 years ago by Henry Chiffner, M.P. for Minehead. He has long ago answered the cry, "Who goes home?" and we may look in vain for Minehead in the list of Parliamentary boroughs. The letters remain, including one giving lengthy account of the opening of Parliament by the King, George III., in the Session of 1762. In the same year, under date 11th of December, the Parliamentary summary-writer gives an account of Pitt's speech in opposition to what is known in history as The Peace of Paris. "The speech," Mr. Chiffner reports, "occupied three hours and twenty-six minutes, and was the worst I ever heard." It certainly did not capture the House, for on a division, whilst 319 declared for peace, only sixty-five followed Pitt into the division lobby.

The letter-writer mentions that "by leave of the House Pitt delivered this speech alternately standing and sitting." In later days, as all the world knows, Mr. Gladstone on one occasion occupied five hours in the exposition of an historic Budget. It was his first Budget Speech, delivered on the 18th April 1853. The late Sir John Mowbray, one of the few members of the last Parliament who heard the speech, vividly recalled the occasion. He told me how surprised he was when it was over to find that five hours had sped. Mr. Gladstone, then in the prime of a magnificent physique, showed no sign of fatigue or of failing voice. It was long before the epoch of the pomatum-pot, and his sole refreshment was a tumbler of water.

It was, of course, the elder Pitt who is described as having occasion from time to time to sit down during delivery of a three hours' speech. He was at the date only in his fifty-fourth year. Whence it would appear that he was either

temporarily indisposed or constitutionally frail. Possibly he was recovering from an attack of his constant enemy, the gout. Not quite sixteen years later he—in the meantime having become Earl of Chatham—fell back in a faint whilst passionately addressing the House of Lords, was carried out, driven to his Kentish home, and a month later died.

I have been looking up Minehead, the borough represented a century and a half ago by Mr. Chiffner. I have

the good fortune to find all about it in a precious little

A Prehistoric
"Dod."

fat book presented to me some time ago by a kindly prejudiced reader, who came upon it on a top shelf of his grandfather's library, and thought it would be "just the thing I should like." His intuition was unerring. *Biographical Memoirs of the Members of the Present House of Commons* is the title of the work. Price, in boards, 12s. It is carefully compiled by Joshua Wilson, M.A., and is corrected to February 1808.

At that time George III. was King.

A PRECIOUS LITTLE FAT
BOOK.

In October of the following year he celebrated the jubilee of his accession. Pitt was two years later followed to the grave, after an interval of eight months, by his great adversary, Fox. The Duke of Portland was Prime Minister; Lord Eldon sat on the Woolsack; Spencer Perceval was Chancellor of the Exchequer, unconscious of the dark shadow that haunted and followed him in the lobby of the House of Commons; Sir Arthur Wellesley was Irish Secretary, and—greatest of all in a mediocre Ministry—Canning was Foreign Secretary.

The book is the precursor of the familiar "Dod" of the later half of the century, but is fuller of the charm of personal narrative than is permissible in the frigid pages of a work where the only glowing period flashes forth in the

Autobiography of Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, with its picturesque background of the Pilgrim Fathers.

On page 454 we come upon Old Sarum, in the flesh as it were. To us of post-Reform days Old Sarum is a kind of myth. In this volume, with the dust of nearly a century on its brown paper boards and its uncut leaves, we find Old Sarum sedately flourishing as Manchester, Birmingham, or Glasgow loom large in "Dod" of to-day. To the imaginative mind the name suggests the idea of a prim old lady in grey silk, with mittens on her hands, her grey hair peeping from under a spotless white cap. That is only imagination. Even at the beginning of the century, when pocket boroughs were as common adjuncts of a landed estate as were pheasant coverts, they were "saying things" about Old Sarum. "The right of election in Old Sarum," Mr. Joshua Wilson, M.A., delicately remarks, "is in the freeholders, being burgage-holders of the borough, which, on account of its decayed state, has been occasionally a subject of animadversion." Animadversion! Word more blessed than Mesopotamia.

In dealing with the constituencies the compiler of the *Memoirs* is accustomed to set forth the total number of electors, and marvellous they are. Thus, on the page preceding the record of Old Sarum stands Okehampton, Devonshire, with 240 electors. On the page following it is Orford, in Suffolk, which returned two members to Parliament by the favour of exactly twenty portsmen, burgesses, and freemen. When Mr. Joshua Wilson, M.A., comes to Old Sarum he is suspiciously silent as to the number of free and independent electors on the register. The sole machinery of election to the two seats representing Old Sarum appears to be the returning officer, a bailiff appointed at the Court-leet of Lord Caledon, who is now Lord of the Manor.

In 1808 Old Sarum had for one of its members Nicholas Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Liverpool's Ministry, formed four years later. About this gentleman's family Mr. Joshua Wilson, M.A., relates an anecdote com-

communicated to him by "a person of condition." Mr. Vansittart's father was in the service of the East India Company. He was sent out with two others on an important mission. The ship is supposed to have foundered at sea. Howbeit, after leaving the English Channel she was heard of never more. One night Mrs. Vansittart dreamt that her husband appeared to her, sitting naked on a barren rock. He told her that whatever rumours she might hear of his death she was to pay no attention to them.

A Story for the
Psychical
Society.


His situation, as described, does not appear to have been altogether comfortable or conformable with usage. But, though naked and homeless, save for the barren rock, he was certainly alive. When, in due time, announcement was made of the foundering of the East Indiaman, and the loss of all on board, Mrs. Vansittart stoutly declined to believe it. As Mr. Wilson puts it, "the lady was so deeply affected with what had occurred, and so prepossessed with the authenticity of the supposed communication, that she refused to put on mourning for the space of two whole years." She lived to an advanced age, with a suit of clothes always ready for the return of the unclad husband. They were never claimed.

An awkward accident befell a well-known member of the House of Commons in the closing days of the Session.

In the wrong
Box. A friend having anticipated the holidays and gone on a long journey, wrote to ask if he would be so good as to rummage through his locker in the corridor leading to the Library, tear up and clear away his papers. "We shall have a General Election in October," he wrote; "and as I don't mean to stand again you can make a clean sweep of my papers. There is nothing of any importance there, but it's just as well not to have them lying about."

Thus adjured, the hon. member went to work with a will. He was much surprised on glancing at the books and papers as he tore them up to find how almost exclusively

they related to military matters. One set in particular contained what looked like an elaborate estimate of the value of cordite produced under divers conditions. The absent member had never shown himself interested in military affairs. When he had spoken upon them in Committee he had ever deprecated growing expenditure on the Army. However, every man knows his own business best. The M.P.'s instructions were to clear out the locker, and this was done effectively.

Two hours later one of the messengers,  FANCY PORTRAIT OF THE COLONEL EXPLODING. pale to the lips, trembling as though a thunderbolt had narrowly missed him in its flight, came up and said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but have you been clearing out Colonel Blank's locker?"

He had. Muddling up numbers, he had gone to the wrong locker, and destroyed the accumulated notes a high military authority had made through the Session. Colonel Blank being a particularly irascible gentleman, and the prorogation being certain to take place on the following Wednesday, the M.P. thought he might as well leave town at once. This he did, gaining five clear days' holiday.

SESSION 1901

CHAPTER XXXIII

FEBRUARY

TALKING about the literary composition of the Queen's Speech on the opening and the closing of a Parliamentary Session, one who has occasionally had something to do with its production tells me a curious thing. The successive paragraphs of the Speeches naturally vary in topic with the events of the day. But whatever happens the Speech must, or ought to, close with a brief prayer. It is a point of honour with the Minister drafting the document that this petition, always the same in purpose, shall never be identical in phrase. Curious to see how this worked out, I have looked up the Speeches from the Throne delivered through the life of the last Parliament, and find the tradition, with rare exceptions, carefully observed.

The prayer was omitted in the Queen's Speech last Session. This is not the first case of the kind. In the Queen's Speech delivered under the guidance of the third Salisbury Administration the accustomed concluding prayer was forgotten. The Speech abruptly closed with suggestion that consideration of legislative measures, except those necessary to provide for the administrative charges of the year, should be deferred to another Session.

When that arrived Ministers came to the front with a

Speech of terrible length, concluding, "I commend these weighty matters to your experienced judgment, and pray that your labours may be blessed by the guidance and favour of Almighty God." On the prorogation in the same Session Her Majesty is made to say: "In bidding you farewell I pray that the blessing of Providence may rest upon all your labours." The Speech on the opening of Parliament in January 1897 was again very long, leaving room only for the somewhat brusque remark, "I heartily commend your important deliberations to the guidance of Almighty God." At the close of the Session, which counted among its accomplished works the dole to denominational schools, the Queen prays that "the fruit of your labours may be assured by the protection and blessing of Almighty God."

The next Session opens with the prayer, "I heartily commend your momentous deliberations to the care and guidance of Almighty God." "I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may attend you" is the Queenly benediction at the close of the Session. In February 1899, the Queen, addressing my lords and gentlemen, prays "that Almighty God may have you in His keeping and guide your deliberations for the good of my people." At the end of the Session—the principal fruit whereof was the Clergy Relief Bill—prayer is offered "that the blessing of Almighty God may attend upon the fruit of your labours for the benefit of my people."

The brief War Session of 1899 was opened with the prayer that "in performing the duties which claim your attention you may have the guidance and blessing of Almighty God." At the prorogation the war in South Africa gave a special turn to the phraseology. "I trust," the Queen is represented as saying, "that the Divine blessing may rest upon your efforts and those of my gallant Army to restore peace and good government to that portion of my Empire, and to vindicate the honour of this country." At the beginning of last Session the Queen, addressing both Houses of Parliament, "commended their deliberations in this anxious time to the blessing and guidance of Almighty God." Her Majesty's last words to the fourteenth Parlia-

ment of her reign prayed "that Almighty God may have you in His keeping, and that His blessing may be with you."

It will be seen from this unresponsive litany that though it is mainly compiled from a narrow circle of words, their arrangement is always studiously varied.

When Mr. Arthur Balfour writes his letters to the Queen, giving a summary of proceedings at the current sitting of

the House of Commons, he observes a formula "Ma'am." of address consecrated by long usage. "Mr. Balfour," so the missive runs, "presents his humble duty to

the Queen, and informs Her Majesty——." Here follows

the narrative, which it is hoped the Leader of the

House, in the dull times that prevailed at West-

minster during the last five years, managed to make

more sparkling than was possible to other Parlia-

mentary summary-writers. This quaint form of address

finds its parallel in the business or social com-

munications of the Queen's *entourage*. In humbler

domestic circles the old-fashioned word "Ma'am" is rarely heard. Servants and shopkeepers when they have occasion to approach its use go back to the more formal original. It is, "Yes, madam," or "No, madam." The Queen is still "Ma'am."

Lord Salisbury has good reason to know that in the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth the form of epistolary communication between her Ministers and Her Majesty was less formal than that in vogue with the Parliamentary letter-writer from the Treasury Bench to-day. The Premier is heritor of the

Queen
Elizabeth and
Sir Robert
Cecil.

MASTER ARTHUR WRITING A LETTER
TO THE QUEEN.

correspondence of his great ancestor and namesake, Sir Robert Cecil. In the spring of 1598 Sir Robert was dispatched to the King of France on a diplomatic mission. Writing to Queen Elizabeth under date 5th April of that year, he addresses her directly as "Most Gracious Sovereign," and throughout as "Your Majesty." In reporting his audience with the King—whom, by the way, "about three of the clock on Tuesday" the English Ambassador found in bed—the astute Cecil turns a

LORD SALISBURY AND HENRY IV. OF FRANCE.

pretty compliment. "We have," he writes, "thought it good to set down precisely the same language which I, the secretary, used, for we know your Majesty to be in all languages one of the *mieux disans* of Europe, and most justly think that your Majesty had cause to be very jealous whether your meaning had been delivered in the French to the same sense which our English repetition should now express."

Here follows, in French of the sixteenth century, what Sir Robert said to the King, sitting down by his bedside,

“where we warmed him so well as, whether it was his physic or our message, Monsieur le Grand was fain to fetch drink for him.”

There is in this letter delightful disclosure of the ways of the old diplomacy. Reporting the reading of what purported to be the text of an important secret document, **The old Diplomacy.** Sir Robert says: “First we left out any of those articles which showed the King of Spain’s readiness to yield him (the King of France) all his desires, because that would have made him proud and to raise himself towards us. For though we think he knows too well what he shall have of Spain, yet we would not have him think that we know it out of the Spaniard’s mouth. Secondly we left out anything to him that might show to him that the Spaniards meant to offer any injurious conditions to England, for then he would also have thought your Majesty’s state the more irreconcilable, and therefore only acquainted him with the reports of Villeroie’s speeches, of the Legate’s speeches, of Belliurs his speeches, and other things which we have further set down in the enclosed.”

Here is a picture for a painter in search of an historical subject. Henri Quatre, in bed at three o’clock on an April afternoon, alternating between the refreshment of medicine and strong drink; seated by his side the crafty English emissary, with innocent air, reading a carefully-trimmed document.

But if the English diplomatist had his secrets the French King had his. The letter, now carefully treasured at Hatfield, is dated 5th April 1598. Eight days later Henri Quatre promulgated the Edict of Nantes, with far-reaching consequences not only for the history of France but for the trade and commerce of England.

A notable thing in the candidature for election to the new Parliament was the rush of novelists into this new field of fiction. One remembers at least three **A new Field of Fiction.** —Conan Doyle, Anthony Hope, and Gilbert Parker. Mr. Barrie coquetted with a constituency, but came

to the conclusion that he would bide a wee. Of the three first named, only Mr. Gilbert Parker was successful in securing one of the Seats of the Mighty. Mr. Conan Doyle was badly beaten, while Mr. Anthony Hope, like his acquaintance Quisanté, was, on the eve of the contest, attacked by illness. Unlike his hero, who struggled on and fell in the breach soon after it was won, Mr. Anthony Hope discreetly retired, regained his health, and lives to fight another day.

Mr. Henry Norman does not rank as a romancist, though he has written *The Real Japan*. But he is a man of letters who by sheer ability has made his way to the front rank of journalism. He has the advantage, rare among our councillors at Westminster, of having studied foreign affairs, Western and Far Eastern, on the spot.

Whether Parliament is the best place for men of

**Literary
Men in
Parliament.** letters is an interesting question. If con-

spicuous success in a new walk be counted as essential to the affirmative, the yea will be uttered with diffidence. It is not necessary to go back to the case of Bulwer Lytton, or the more painful one of John Stuart Mill, to support the asser-

"THE REAL JAPAN"—MR. HENRY NORMAN.

tion that there is something in the atmosphere of the House of Commons uncongenial to the ascendancy of the literary man.

One brilliant exception is found in the case of Lord

Rosebery, who is equally in command of himself and the situation whether writing books in his library or making speeches in the House of Lords and on the public platform. But there is no other. Mr. John Morley will be known to fame as a literary man, not as a member of the House of Commons. If any man might be counted upon in advance to command the attention of the House of Commons it was Mr. Justin M'Carthy. A man of wide reading, retentive memory, varied knowledge of the world, gifted with humour, a ready speaker, here seemed every quality to compel success. Yet the author of *Dear Lady Disdain*, and a score of other popular novels, never reached that place in the House which his talents seemed to merit, and for which his friends confidently designated him.

On the whole journalists do better in the House of Commons than do those ranking as men of letters. Mr. Courtney instructed the world through the leader columns of the *Times* before, encouraged by his success, he stepped on to the more prominent platform of the House of Commons to carry on his beneficent work. Mr. Labouchere is one of the most entertaining journalists of the age, not laying aside the pen even while he was steadily making his way to a position of influence in the House of Commons. If Mr. T. P. O'Connor had given himself up entirely to Parliamentary work he would have taken high rank as a debater. But the House of Commons will have nothing to do with men who give it only the odds and ends of their time. After living laborious days in discharge of his journalistic work Mr. O'Connor sometimes scorns delights, and remains in his place long enough to catch the Speaker's eye. Even with this desultory habit he commands an audience for a vigorous speech. The general result is, however, confirmatory of the axiom that no man can serve two masters.

Mr. Gibson Bowles, perceiving this fundamental truth, has renounced journalism, in which profession he first made his mark, has given himself up entirely to the House of Commons, and has made his way accordingly. It must not

be forgotten that another member of Parliament, of almost equal knowledge of public affairs, followed the same course. Whilst the Marquis of Salisbury was still Lord Robert Cecil, he was a regular, even a struggling, journalist. His political career opening out, he gave up leader-writing, and devoted himself to the House of Commons. The advantage of his early training is felt and witnessed to this day in the exquisite perfection of the turn of his spoken sentences. The Premier is one of the very few of our public men whose political speeches have a subtle, indescribable, but unmistakable, literary flavour.

The new Parliament shows a considerable advance in the

The Press. number of members who in one way or the other are connected with the Press. Survivors of the last Parliament are Mr. Arthur Elliott, whose seat was saved

LORD ROBERT CECIL AS A STRUGGLING JOURNALIST.

from contest by the chance appearance in the Quarterly he edits of an article on the war; Sir John Leng, proprietor of the *Dundee Advertiser*, who does not often trouble the House with a set speech, has a searching way of putting questions which effects more practical good throughout a Session than the average of long speeches; Mr. Dalziel, who a dozen years ago entering the Lobby as a journalist, now sits for Kirkcaldy, holding it with increased majority, whilst all round him Liberals fell. His is another case of the not frequent incidence of equal facility with tongue and pen. He has the courage of his opinions, does not flinch from performance of what he regards as a public

duty, and in a pleasant voice that adds to the aggravation "says things" that sometimes shock the sensibilities of the gentlemen of England seated opposite.

When he first entered the House he was unconsciously and undesignedly the occasion for embarrassment in high places. North of the Tweed his surname is pronounced as if all the letters had fallen out of it except the first and the last. When Mr. Gully came to the Chair he scrupulously called on "Mr. D L," the letters pronounced full length. The puzzlement displayed on the countenances of mere Southerners at sound of this unfamiliar name was embarrassing. To the Speaker, as to other Englishmen, the member for Kirkcaldy to-day is "Mr. Dalsell."

Other old members returned to the new Parliament are Mr. Scott, the editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, and Mr. Willox, proprietor of the *Liverpool Courier*. Among newcomers are Mr. Winston Churchill, who I venture to predict will make his mark in the House as he did in the armoured train; Mr. Cust, a former editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*; Sir George Newnes, and Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, one of a notable band of brothers. The total of newspaper proprietors and journalists in the present House of Commons is thirty-three.

SIR GEORGE NEWNES.

Many years ago Mr. Gladstone, talking about the constitution of the first House of Commons in which he sat, told me there

Trade in
Parliament.

were in it not more than five members connected with trade and commerce. Things have in this matter considerably changed since that far-off day. Trade and commerce represent considerably more than half the muster of the fifteenth Parliament of the Queen. There are, to blurt out

what the member of Parliament of the mid-century would regard as an appalling fact, thirteen who rank as shopkeepers and traders.

In this the first regular Session of the new Parliament the attendance in both Houses will be appreciably greater owing to the return of members who volunteered for active service in South Africa. Whilst the House of Commons contributed twenty-seven members, the House of Lords sent thirty-six, including the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, Lord Kitchener, and Lord Methuen. Of the peers the Marquis of Winchester and the Earl of Airlie were killed on the field of battle. Lord Folkestone, who went out as Major of the 1st Wiltshire Volunteer Rifle Corps, comes back Earl of Radnor, his father, once a well-known figure in the House of Commons, dying during his absence. This event removes a promising figure from the Commons. In the one or two speeches he made since his return for the Wilton Division in 1892, Lord Folkestone displayed a lively talent, which it is to be feared will be lost in the more languorous atmosphere of the House of Lords. He commenced his training for Parliamentary work by acting as assistant private secretary to Mr. Chaplin at the Board of Agriculture. Had it been possible for him to return to the new House of

Home from
the War.

ON A BACK BENCH—MR. CHAPLIN.

CHAPTER XXXIV

APRIL

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN is not an emotionable man. It is consequently difficult to determine whether in **Lords and Commons.** criticising the Queen's Speech in the December Session he was more moved by omission of the prayer with which such document customarily closes, or by the absence of direct address to the House of Commons when mention was made of intention to ask for further moneys to carry on the war. The Queen's Speech usually opens with address to "My Lords and Gentlemen" of both Houses. Midway comes a brief paragraph specially directed to "Gentlemen of the House of Commons," in which the question of money is delicately broached. That is formal acknowledgment of the constitutional fact that the Commons are exclusive guardians of the public purse. In all ordinary legislation, Lords and Commons work on a level footing. One may alter or throw out a Bill originating in the other House. But the Budget Bill, involving national expenditure, may not be meddled with by the House of Lords.

There has grown up a curious custom illustrating this distinction and testifying to the secret desire of the peers to trespass as far as is safe upon forbidden ground. Dealing in Committee with a measure involving rating—say, an Education Bill—any peer may, if he pleases, propose an amendment to the Bill as it left the Commons. Also the House may, if the majority see fit, adopt the suggestion.

But when after third reading the Bill goes back to the Commons any amendment touching money matters is printed in red ink, indicating that it is merely suggestive in character. If the Commons do not accept it, it is struck out, and there an end of the matter.

In the case of ordinary Bills issuing from the Commons and amended in the Lords, they must go back to the Lords

IN THE LIONS' DEN.

for consideration of the action of the Commons should the latter decline to agree to the amendments. This necessity does not exist in cases where the Lords' amendments affect the expenditure of money.

The new Parliament, as far as it has gone, has not developed anything in the nature of an epoch-making party on the model of that Lord Randolph Churchill led twenty years ago. Mr. Labouchere and Sir Charles Dilke occupy the old quarters of the The Fourth Party and after. But the combination is not marked by any of that discipline and system that made the Fourth Party a power.

There was a time when the Welsh members showed a disposition to organise a Parliamentary guerilla force. They had the making of excellent leaders in Mr. Lloyd George

and Mr. Samuel Evans. As long as their own political friends were in power they showed themselves industrious and vigorous. They had a good deal to do with making Lord Rosebery's Government so uncomfortable that its members rather welcomed than resented dismissal on a side issue. The incentive of opposing his titular leader, dear to the heart of a good Liberal, being withdrawn, the Welsh party fell to pieces and has not been reconstituted.

The nearest resemblance to the Fourth Party established since its dissolution was that formed in the Parliament of 1892-95 by Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. Hanbury, and Mr. Bartley. They followed closely the tactics of their prototype. Ever hanging on the flanks of the enemy, ready to take advantage of any opening of attack, they invested their procedure with

**The hard
Case of
Mr. Gibson
Bowles.**

THE RAIDERS—MESSRS. BOWLES, HANBURY, AND BARTLEY.

attractive variety by sometimes flaunting their pastors and masters on the Front Opposition Bench. They appreciably contributed to the patriotic design of making office untenable by a Liberal Ministry. When that object was secured, they had a right to expect to share the spoils of victory. A bone was thrown to them. Mr. Hanbury was made Financial

Secretary to the Treasury. But Mr. Bowles, the most brilliant of the trio, whose business training would have been useful in any Under-Secretaryship, was, in company with Mr. Bartley, left out in the cold.

Contrast with the good fortune of some men, whom extreme modesty could not prevent them from recognising as inferior in capacity, made the disappointment more bitter. When, last autumn, the Ministry was reconstructed after the General Election opportunity offered for redressing this wrong. Lord Salisbury neglected to seize it. It is true that Mr. Hanbury, admitted within the Ministerial circle, was advanced to Cabinet rank, having committed to his charge the only department of State of whose business he knew nothing. Mr. Bartley was offered a knighthood and a salaried post, acceptance of which would have necessitated his withdrawal from the Parliamentary scene, and was, therefore, declined. If any overtures were made to Mr. Bowles he, amid a flux of confidence on the topic, preserved rare reticence.

A story current at the Carlton Club, probably wholly imaginative, alleges addition of insult to injury. When a vacancy in the Secretaryship of the Admiralty was created by the supersession of Mr. Macartney, Mr. Bowles (so the story runs) wrote to the Prime Minister pointing out the necessity in the national interests of appointing to the office a man who had practical knowledge of seafaring matters and well-defined ideas on the subject of Navy reform. In due course he received the following reply:—

DEAR MR. BOWLES—I agree entirely with what you say as to the qualifications of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, and I have appointed Arnold Forster to the post.

Last year I ventured to suggest that the Terrace of the House of Commons might through the summer months contribute a desirable flash of colour to the river-
side by having its long length varied by tubs or ^{Trees on} the Terrace.
pots of flowering shrubs, after the fashion common enough on the terraces of country houses. The idea rather took on

in the House of Commons. But Sir W. Thistleton-Dyer, Director of Kew Gardens, being privately consulted, was rather deterrent. He tells me, what most others have forgotten, that many years ago attempt was made to decorate the Terrace with bays in tubs. After the first Session the trees went to Hyde Park and the tubs to Kew Gardens and never returned. The place was found to be too exposed and wind-swept. But Sir William admits that tubs of flowering shrubs might be set out temporarily, though—and here is where his difficulty comes in—he surmises that they would have to be carried through the building.

That is a misapprehension. There is direct approach to the Terrace from Palace Yard. Nothing would be easier than to convey the shrubs to the Terrace, removing them at the end of the Session. The Bailiff of the Parks, who looks after the flower-beds in Parliament Square, could, on receiving the necessary authority, speedily effect the desirable transformation

SCENE

For those not personally concerned there is something pleasing in contemplation of the fact that the First Minister of the Crown, the principal agent in the Government of the richest Empire in the world, draws a salary of only £2000 a year, less Income-tax severely deducted from quarterly payments. This is a fee the manager of a minor railway company would scorn. It is allotted to secretaries of prosperous commercial companies. It is frequently made in a day by operators on the Stock Exchange. Lord Salisbury accepts it with the measure of gratitude dictated by the fact that it is secured to him only by happy accident. As Prime Minister no salary is provided. Lord Cross, having obligingly retired from the office of Lord Privy Seal, the Premier succeeds him.

GOT NO WORK TO DO
—VISCOUNT CROSS.

A penniless
Premier.

Some years ago, it being noted that the Lord Privy Seal had absolutely no work to do, the salary was, by rare application of logical principle, abolished. It has now been revived in favour of the Prime Minister, otherwise unprovided for.

Lord Hardwicke, challenged last Session with retaining his connection with a stockbroking firm whilst he acted as Under Secretary for India, frankly explained the reason why. He could not afford permanently to abandon his position in the City for the price of being a few years in office as one of Her Majesty's Ministers.

A poorly paid
Profession.

That is a bluff, businesslike view of the situation. Regarded merely as a means of livelihood the profession of a Minister of the Crown is the most poorly paid open to men of capacity. Mr. Chamberlain is, perhaps, the most striking example of rapid advancement to Ministerial position. He became President of the Board of Trade within four years of taking his seat in the House of Commons. He has during his twenty-four years of Parliamentary life held office for an aggregate of something over ten years. During that time he has drawn about £37,000 in the form of salary, a sum which, had he devoted himself to commercial pursuits, he might have made in twelve months. Probably before he retired from business he achieved that record.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach is bracketed with Mr. Chamberlain in the matter of brief apprenticeship before attaining the full honour of Ministerial position. He, too, sat on the Treasury Bench four years after he entered the House. Mr. Arthur Balfour and Mr. Ritchie each waited eleven years for promotion. Mr. Gerald Balfour was ten years a private member, and Mr. Hanbury sat on a back bench through twenty-three years. Parents considering "what they shall do with Charles" will do well, if their main desire be to have his merits adequately recognised in the way of pecuniary remuneration, to think twice before they devote him to a political career.

Lord Salisbury, among other distinctions, has the largest family circle in the House of Commons. They muster five

all told. It is a quiet reproach to much murmuring at the General Election that at least two do not hold Ministerial office. These are his younger son, Lord Hugh Cecil, and his nephew, Mr. Evelyn Cecil.

Family Circles
in the
Commons.



A FAMILY GROUP.

A curious instance of the votes of two constituencies being nullified by distribution of their representation in a single family is supplied by the case of Reading and Salisbury. Mr. G. W. Palmer, the Liberal member for Reading, effaces on a division the vote of his brother, Mr. W. H. Palmer, the Conservative member for Salisbury. The peculiarity of this case is increased by the fact that at the General Election each brother secured his seat by precisely the same majority —239.

THE BROTHERS BALFOUR.

Some years ago Sir William Harcourt had a brother on the Conservative side of the House of Commons. It was pretty to watch him,

with stolid face, listening to the brilliant harangues of his Radical brother. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman occupies at this day a position identical in this respect with that of his predecessor in the Leadership of the Opposition. On big divisions his vote is nullified by that of his brother, the Conservative member for Glasgow University. Sir James Ferguson has a brother in the House, the relationship being sometimes unsuspected, since his name is Sir Charles Dalrymple. These two vote in the same lobby as do the brothers Balfour, Lord Cranborne and Lord Hugh Cecil, Sir Howard Vincent and Sir Edgar, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett and Mr. Burdett-Coutts, and the *frères* Redmond. Mr. Tim Healy is left to lament severance from brother Maurice, bereavement accomplished by the General Election.

CHAPTER XXXV

MAY

It is probable that when, next year, the King opens Parliament in person, the scene will be moved to Westminster Hall.



Members of the The King and
House of Commons Parliament.

who took part in the football scrimmage on Valentine's Day this year are not likely to invite further experience of the same kind. When the proposal of Westminster Hall as an alternative stage for the ceremony was suggested, Mr. Balfour, the charges of the war pressing hard upon him, demurred on the ground of cost. Gentlemen of the House of Commons who vote public money will not grudge anything reasonable if it deliver them from the mingled indignity and damage attendant upon their share in the pageant of the new King opening his first Parliament in an infant century.

"TO SEE THE KING IN HIS GOLDEN
CROWN."

His Majesty, who, like his Imperial nephew, has a keen

eye for scenic effect, instantly approved the suggestion about Westminster Hall. It is certainly worth a modest expenditure to secure such effect as is here possible. Our forefathers, to the remotest verge of recorded history, used the stately building as the scene of historic gatherings. It is true they largely took the form of trials, ending in sentence of death. But that was part of the manners of the day.

The Hall seems as if it had been specially built with a view to such a ceremony as the opening of Parliament. At the far end the floor is raised by several steps, forming a unique stage on which the King and Queen, being seated, command full view of the multitude in the body of the Hall, themselves conveniently seen from every corner of its vast area. The stage will be approached by the broad corridor and stairway leading from the Royal robing-rooms in the House of Lords.¹

In some of the pictures published in the illustrated papers descriptive of the scene in the House of Lords when the King opened Parliament in person, the Serjeant-at-Arms is shown standing at the Bar near the Speaker with the Mace on his shoulder. This is an error, which recalls an ancient and interesting piece of etiquette. The Mace was not on view in the House of Lords on 14th February, for the sufficient reason that it was not carried within the portals. It is true the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms escorting the Speaker (Mr. Erskine, in another honorary capacity, was in personal attendance on the King) bore it on his shoulder in advance of the surging mass of Commoners struggling to obey the command of the King to hear the Royal Speech read. Arrived at the door of the House of Lords the Mace was there deposited, and there remained till the returning procession re-formed.

This procedure is in accordance with the regulation that the Mace is never carried into the presence of the Sovereign. At the Diamond Jubilee, when the Speaker and the House

¹ The project after consideration by a joint Committee was abandoned on the score of expense.

of Commons proceeded to Buckingham Palace to offer their congratulations to Her Majesty the late Queen, the Mace accompanied the Speaker in his carriage. But it was left

THE MACE ACCOMPANIED THE SPEAKER.

there when the right hon. gentleman entered the Palace to make obeisance to Her Majesty.

Talking about the letter to the late Queen nightly written from the House of Commons by the Leader, I quoted its formula of address as follows: "Mr. Balfour The Letter to the Queen. presents his humble duty to the Queen and informs Her Majesty——" A correspondent writes from Sussex: "In reading the lives of Prime Ministers I have often been struck with the singular departure from customary forms shown in the Ministers writing in the third person and putting the Sovereign in the second. For instance, Lord Palmerston, 11th June 1859: 'Viscount Palmerston presents his humble duty to your Majesty and has the honour of assuring your Majesty,' etc. Again, Lord Russell, 9th June 1866: 'Lord Russell presents his humble duty to your Majesty. He is,' etc. To take an earlier date, Earl Grey, 8th February 1831: 'Earl Grey with his humble duty to your Majesty has in the first place again to entreat your Majesty,' etc. I have taken these instances quite at random from the first books I have put my hands on, but there are scores of others down to the end of Lord Russell's correspondence. It would be interesting to know if this rather odd formula had at last been altered."

The formula I cited as pertaining to Mr. Arthur Balfour's letter to the Queen was communicated to me as having been the usage of Mr. Gladstone, and I assumed it was common to all such letter-writers. It will be noted in the interesting compilation of my correspondent that the quaint phrase, "presents his humble duty," is used with whatever variety of the personal pronoun.

The opening of the first Session of the premier Parliament of a new century was fraught with much mental tribulation to Mr. Caldwell. To begin with, there was the title of the King. Edward VII. he called himself, amid the acclaim of the people who had feared the apparition of Albert I. But Scotland, to-day an integral part of Great Britain, knew no preceding King Edward, much less six. Whatever His Majesty might be south of the Tweed, he was Edward I. in Scotland. Mr. Caldwell had compunctions about taking the Oath of Allegiance. He yielded with mental reservation he is prepared to set forth in detail at any time the House of Commons may have a couple of hours to spare.

Under which
King?

KING

Ist of

AN AMENDMENT BY MR. CALDWELL.

Another scarcely less serious difficulty almost simultaneously presented itself. Were Scotch and Irish members secure in their seats in the Parliament elected last October; or must they, within the limit of six months, again go to

their constituents? On this point the law seemed lamentably clear. The Reform Act which Dizzy **A nice Point of Law.** carried through the House of Commons in 1867 provided that thereafter the dissolution of Parliament should not be made peremptory by the demise of the Crown. In the days of the Stuarts the death of the King (unless his head were cut off, when it did not matter) automatically dissolved Parliament. The inconvenience of this doubly-disturbing event being recognised, an Act was passed in the reign of William III. declaring that an interval of six months should follow between the death of the Sovereign and the dissolution of Parliament. A clause of the Act specifically enjoined that it should not extend to Scotland or Ireland.

Mr. Caldwell, concentrating his powerful mind on the Act of 1867, was driven to the conclusion that the Act of William III. remains operative in cases of Scotland and Ireland, and that before July next Scotch and Irish members must seek re-election.

The ingenuity of the Law Officers of the Crown, one himself a Scotch member, avoided catastrophe. Concurrently with the Reform Act of 1867 separate Bills were passed regulating the Scotch and Irish Franchise. The draughtsman of the main measure, having this exclusively in mind, added the clause limiting the Reform Act to England and Wales. The combined wisdom of the two Houses of Parliament—Mr. Caldwell had not at the time a seat in the House of Commons—overlooking this blunder, it was embodied in a Statute. The Law Officers ruled it was no bar to the existence of the full House elected in October 1900. But Mr. Caldwell is not wholly content.

Parliament had escape from another dilemma more real and less widely observed. Whilst the law controlling the existence of Parliament sitting at the time of the demise of the Crown is more or less clearly dealt with by Statute, no provision is made to meet the quite possible case of the Sovereign dying during the process of a General Election. It is no secret that the state of the Queen's health in the autumn of last year gave

**What might
have
happened.**

rise to the gravest anxiety in high places. It is not a matter that can be openly stated by a Minister. But the fact is it had much to do with the decision Mr. Asquith denounced as "hustling the country into a General Election." The strong constitution of Queen Victoria enabled her to rally from the prostration in which the approach to winter plunged her. Had the end come in October whilst the elections were going forward it would have been necessary forthwith to summon the old Parliament, just as, at less than twenty-four hours' notice, Parliament was summoned in January immediately on the death of the Queen.

There was, as usual, appreciable delay in the completion of the election for Shetland and Orkney. Had the Sovereign died in that interval the 669 elections already completed would have been invalid. The old Parliament called together again would have been got rid of as soon as possible, fresh writs issued, and the General Election taken over again. Which shows afresh, with startling novelty, how in the midst of life we are in death.

When, early in the Session, the salary of Lord Privy Seal came to be voted, objection was taken in the House of

The Lord Privy Seal. Commons to Lord Salisbury's selection of that office with conjunction of the Premiership. It was urged in some quarters that he would have done better to prefer the title of First Lord of the Treasury. To Mr. Arthur Balfour, present holder of the office, to whom the criticism was offered, this seemed to partake of the courteous communication made to a Chinese mandarin when his Sovereign desires that he should commit suicide. Ignoring that personal aspect of the question, Mr. Balfour dwelt on the objection that, whereas Lord Privy Seal is highly placed in the Table of Precedence, the First Lord of the Treasury is unknown to that august edict. With the

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL.

Prime Minister merely First Lord of the Treasury—though, as in the case of the present incumbency, he were Leader of the House of Commons—he must yield precedence to the Master of the Horse or to an Irish Bishop.

To *nous autres*, unless we are in a hurry to catch a train or exceedingly hungry, it is a matter of small importance whether we leave a dining-room last or enter it first. Amongst our betters it is a question of the highest, keenest interest. Mr. Gladstone, with the weight of the Empire on his shoulders, was never oblivious to it. I remember, at a time when he was Prime Minister, seeing him halt at the door after leaving a dinner-table, waiting for a comparatively unimportant member of his Administration to pass out first. The noble lord demurred.

“Yes,” said Mr. Gladstone, smilingly, “we are both in the Cabinet, but you are of the baronial rank.”

And so the First Minister of the Crown, one of the greatest statesmen of his age, gave the *pas* to the blushing Baron.

The order of the Table of Precedence passeth ordinary understanding. Whilst the existence of the Prime Minister is ignored, the Archbishop of Canterbury, whom Some Curiousities of Precedence. he has created, comes next to the Royal Circle, the outer rim of which is marked in succession by the Sovereign's younger sons, his grandsons, his uncles, and his nephews. Next to the Archbishop of Canterbury stands the Lord High Chancellor, comforted on the other side by the Archbishop of York. The Lord Chancellor of Ireland, not a correspondingly important person in the Administration, comes third in precedence among Ministers. The Lord President of the Council and the Lord Privy Seal, both minor Ministerial offices, stand third and fourth. The Treasurer of the Household, the Comptroller, and the Vice-Chamberlain, Ministerial posts filled by young gentlemen of good family, to whom a thousand a year is a comfort, take precedence of Secretaries of State under baronial rank.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer sits below the salt. As for the Secretary for War, the First Lord of the

Admiralty, the President of the Board of Trade, and even the Colonial Secretary, the Table of Precedence knoweth them not. The Speaker, the First Commoner of the land, must walk behind a marquis's younger son, must even give

THE ORDER OF PRECEDENCE.

the *pas* to an Irish Bishop if, on going down to dinner, his lordship can show that he was consecrated prior to the Irish Church Act of 1869.

The House of Commons, watching with friendly interest the appearance on the Parliamentary scene of the son and heir of Lord Randolph Churchill, observes a curious mannerism in his speech. It is more ^{A Twentieth-Century Ephraimite.} than hinted at in the following translation of the warrant for the arrest of Mr. Winston Churchill issued after his escape from Boer clutches: "Englishman, twenty-five years old, about 5 ft. 8 in. high—indifferent build—walks

a little with a bend forward—pale appearance—red brownish hair—small moustache hardly perceptible—talks through the nose, and cannot pronounce the letter S properly.”

It will be remembered that a similar peculiarity marked another body of fugitives of war. When the Gileadites, under command of Jephthah, took the passes of Jordan, the defeated Ephraimites attempted to cross the river. “And it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth; and he said, Sibboleth; for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan.”

It is certain that had Mr. Winston Churchill fought against Jephthah instead of Mr. Kruger his body would centuries ago have been swept away by the River Jordan.

An examination of the Household accounts of William IV., the system inherited from the Georges, discloses the **William IV.'s** existence of a number of official personages **Civil List.** whose style smacks of the *dramatis personæ* in some of Mr. Gilbert's plays. There was a Gentleman of the Pantry drawing £200 a year; a Groom at £60, and a Porter at £50. Officials of the same rank, pouching something like the same salary, presided in the Wine Cellar, the Ewry, the Spicery, the Wood Yard, the Silver Scullery, the Pewter Scullery, in the composing of Confectionery and in the production of Pastry.

There was a Deliverer of Greens who drew £85 per annum from the taxpayer. There was a Clerk Comptroller of the Kitchen, who ranked as Esquire, and pocketed £300 a year. There was a First Master Cook rated at £237 per annum, and a Second Master Cook who took £20 less. There was a Yeoman of the Mouth, cheap at £138. He was not, as some might think, connected with dentistry, that being a profession apart. There were Master Scourers and Assistant Scourers, and eke a Keeper of the Butter and Egg Office at £60 a year. There were Purveyors of bacon,

butter, and cheese, of milk and cream, and of "oysters." There was a Glassman, a Teaman, a Trunk Maker, and a Cork Cutter. Nothing was lacking to the majesty of the Household.

The reforming hand, just beginning to be felt in high places, swept away many of these ancient servitors. Some still remain, preserving the old style, and will be drawing modest salaries in King Edward VII.'s newly-settled Civil List.

To recall the fact that Prince Albert, coming to this country on his bridal errand, drove from Dover to London by road, sharply illustrates the far-reaching changes in daily life brought about within the reign of Queen Victoria. The bridegroom-elect crossed the Channel

A Race to the
Altar.

CUPID AS POSTBOY.

on 6th January 1840, and was rudely buffeted by the sea. He was so upset that, in spite of the urgency of his errand, he lay all night at Dover. Setting forth at midday he reached Canterbury at two o'clock next day, halting there long enough to receive an address from the Mayor and Corporation and to attend service in the Cathedral. At

half-past nine he resumed his journey, rattling through Chatham and Rochester, where the Mayors and Corporations stood by the roadside looking for opportunity to present addresses.

Once on the wing the bridegroom travelled swiftly. At New Cross an escort of the 14th Dragoons was in waiting, with orders to conduct His Serene Highness with due state across the Metropolis. The Prince fled from them as if they also had addresses to present, arriving at Buckingham Palace an hour ahead of them. The journey was concluded at 4.30 in the afternoon, the road from Canterbury having been covered in just seven hours.

Among the letters and despatches stored at Hatfield dating back to the spacious times of Elizabeth there are

**An older
Record.** many which still preserve on the envelopes, in faded ink, the record of their homeward journey.

One despatch from Sir Robert Cross, "on board Her Majesty's ship the *Vanguard*," is interesting by way of comparison with Prince Albert's historic ride. It is addressed to Sir Robert Cecil, and dated 29th January 1597. It is indorsed by the writer: "Haste, Haste. Post Haste. Haste. Robt. Crosse." Underneath is the postboy's record, running thus: "At Dover, at seven o'clock at night; Canterbury, past ten o'clock at night; at Sittingbourne, at one o'clock in the morning; Rochester, 30th of Jan., at three o'clock in the morning; Dartford, the 30th day, at half-hour past six in the morning; London, the 30th day, at ten o'clock in the morning."

It will be seen Prince Albert, following the precise route of the sixteenth-century postboy, beat him between Canterbury and London by five hours.

Five years ago, at the opening of the first working Session of the Parliament that placed Lord Salisbury in

**"Where is
dat Barty
now?"** power, a notable document was circulated among the Liberal Opposition. It was signed by a score of members prominent in the Radical wing.

Confronted by the accomplished defeat of the Liberal Party

at the poll in 1895 they set themselves the task of studying its causes, with a view to regaining lost ground. They came to the conclusion that it pointed to "the necessity of such reorganisation of Liberal forces as will evoke and focus on one great question all its fighting energy both in Parliament and in the country."

Having thus admitted that unity was the only hope of salvation to the Liberal Party, the signators proceeded to elaborate a scheme for the creation of a new faction in its camp. "It has been resolved," so the document ran, "to form a distinctive advanced Radical section in Parliament, and to appeal to the Radical element in the Liberal Party and in the constituencies to carry on an active and energetic campaign in support of the principle herein laid down."

The first principle was that "an advanced Radical section be and is hereby constituted of those members of Parliament who agree to co-operate in independent Parliamentary action for the promotion of Radical principles in legislation and in public opinion." This was a cheering prospect for Sir William Harcourt, who had just undertaken the thankless task of leading in the House of Commons a discredited, disheartened, and, even if united, hopelessly small Opposition.

The new Party did not succeed in establishing any influence in the direction of curbing the autocracy of a bloated Ministry. The intimacy of the Committee Room, where at the outset meetings were regularly held, revealed the painful fact that the Treasury Bench had not a monopoly of wrong-headedness. The new Party gradually dissolved, leaving not a wrack behind, unless we cluster under that word Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Labouchere, and Mr. M'Kenna, who at least continued to sit together on the front bench below the gangway.

A SURVIVAL.

Looking along the benches it is curious to note what a large proportion of those who signed this manifesto in May 1896 have disappeared from the scene, as it opens with the century on the new Parliament. Among them are Dr. Clark, Mr. W. Allen, Mr. Maden, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Philip Stanhope, and Sir W. Wedderburn. In addition to Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Atherley Jones, and Mr. M'Kenna, there are still with us Mr. W. Allan, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Samuel Evans, Mr. William Jones, Mr. Lloyd George, and Captain Norton. But there has been no sign yet of resuscitation of "the Radical Party."

CHAPTER XXXVI

JUNE

IT is a curious trait in the complex character of Lord Salisbury, one that must give acute pain to his fifth son, that a bishop is never safe in his company. ^{Premier}
Like Lord Hugh Cecil in the House of Commons, ^{and Primata.}
the Premier is a devout man, a strict churchgoer, one



"A SHY AT A BISHOP."

brought up to reverence the cloth. But he never can resist the temptation to have a shy at a bishop or to trip up a

Primate. The passion becomes irresistible when occasion arises in connection with the Liquor Question.

Early this Session there was difficulty with the bishops, arising out of this vexed question of the Liquor Laws.

The Bona-fide Traveller. The Bishop of Winchester moved the second reading of a Bill putting six miles between the thirsty *bona-fide* traveller and his loving cup. At present the law decrees that he may not drink unless he has travelled three miles from his home. Lord Salisbury would have nothing to do with the Bill. With pleased recollections of his prowess on the tricycle when speeding round the quiet glades of Buckingham Palace Gardens, he laughed to scorn the idea that an extra three miles would be a deterrent to the thirsty bicyclist.

"If you have a bicycle," he said, looking at the Lord Chancellor, who has hitherto withstood the fascination of that method of locomotion, "six miles will, especially if you are thirsty, count as little as three."

He was snappish to the Archbishop of York, who supported the Bill. He was withering in his wrath against the Bishop of Winchester, who had

"HE WAS SNAPPISH TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK." brought it in.

"The object you are seeking to attain," he said, turning upon the Bishop, "is trivial in the extreme. You are proposing to introduce the maximum of disturbance with a minimum of result."

There was a pretty full House, nearly a hundred being present. On ordinary questions such a muster means on a division a Ministerial majority of five, perhaps six, to one. The Whips brought ominous prognostications of defeat.

These were so nearly realised that the Government escaped with a majority of six. If this kind of thing is frequently repeated Lord Salisbury may have to reconsider his position on the question of Disestablishment.

On this occasion, as on all others when he joins the debate, the Premier justified his reputation as personally the most interesting individual in political life. In **Lords and Commons.** the main the House of Lords is a deadly dull place. The dumping-ground of the political world, it contains a considerable stratum of men who have either proved failures in the more active arena of the Commons or, after a more or less useful career, have reached a period of life when labour is but sorrow. They must be provided for, and as there is no room for them in a new or reconstructed Ministry, nor any suitable Colonial Governorship available, they have a coronet clapped on their heads and are sent to the House of Lords.

Beyond this constant stream from backwaters outside, the House of Lords has to contend with the fundamental principle of heredity, which does not of necessity imply special ability. Of course, there are exceptions alike in cases of hereditary succession and the introduction of new blood. When, half-a-dozen times in the life of a Parliament, a question of Imperial importance comes on in the Lords the debate, strictly pruned of excrescences, rises to a level higher than that habitually attained in the Commons. But on ordinary nights, in pursuance of average business, it is impossible to conceive a duller assembly than that sparsely gathered in what, from the point of view of acoustics, is probably the most faulty chamber in the world.

Over this conglomeration of the commonplace Lord Salisbury's personality coruscates. When he rises all ears are strained to catch his slightest word. A **A supreme Man.** prominent charm in his speeches (the delight not fully shared by his colleagues) is that nobody, certainly not excepting the Premier, knows what he will have said before he resumes his seat. If the vision of the housemaid crosses his mind he must needs follow it up, even

though she lead him to throw out a Bill introduced in the other House by a faithful follower, and carried with the assistance of his own Lord Advocate. In the case referred to as happening early in the Session, having risen with no other intention than to flout the Bishop of Winchester and

CORUSCATING AND BLAZING.

sneer at the Archbishop of York, before he sat down he had committed himself to the principle of local option.

This and other blazing indiscretions are due simply to Lord Salisbury's contempt for his fellow-man. Honestly and unaffectedly he does not know why at least one-half of them exist. Sometimes his withering regard is fastened upon an individual, as was the case with Mr. Disraeli when, fifty years ago, he sat with him in the House of Commons, little dreaming that before the century had entered on its last quarter he would journey home with him arm-in-arm from

Berlin. More often it is a class of men that excites his ire. It indicates the breadth of his mind that upon occasion he views with equal ire extreme Radicals and the Bench of Bishops.

Amongst much interesting matter in the *Life and Correspondence of Mr. Childers*, recently published by Mr. Murray, there is startling proof of fatal neglect of lessons learned in the Transvaal twenty years After Twenty Years. ago. In a letter dated 16th February 1881, Sir George Colley, making the best of the repulse at Laing's Nek, writes: "The want of good mounted troops told very heavily against us, and our soldiers are not as trained skirmishers and shots as the majority of these Boers, who from their childhood have lived in the country to a great extent by their guns, and are used to stalking and shooting deer. Our artillery does not at all compensate for our want of mounted troops. The Boers keep cover too well, and when exposed move too rapidly and in too loose order to give artillery much chance."

It will be seen that this passage might have been written by Sir George White to Lord Lansdowne before he shut himself up in Ladysmith. Possibly a future biographer will be able to find an analogous passage in that correspondence.

Another fact illustrative of the French saying, the more things change the more they resemble each other, appears in this same letter. "The anxiety of the Boers to conceal their own losses is," Sir George wrote, "almost comical." We have not forgotten the Boer bulletins in the early stages of the latest war, wherein, after desperate fights at Magersfontein, Spion Kop, and the like, the British were slain by hundreds, whilst at the most three or five Boers bit the dust.

Ministers who in forgetfulness of Colley's clamour for mounted troops warned off the Colonies with haughty "No mounted men, please," can scarcely be expected The Orange Free State. to have taken note of another lesson coming down from Majuba days. According to their spoken

testimony nothing amazed Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain more than the circumstance of the Orange Free State throwing in its lot with the Transvaal. Sir George Colley knew better.

"I am afraid," he wrote, "there is no doubt the Boers are receiving large assistance from the Free State despite the efforts of President Brand and his Government. It is remarkable how they always cling to the Free State border as a secure retreat in case of reverse."

Thus history repeats itself, and thus are its lessons forgotten.

In the Memoirs published at the time of the Queen's death general testimony was borne by many authorities to Her Majesty's personal share in the daily task of administering the affairs of the Empire. The most striking testimony was borne by Mr. Balfour in his speech in the Commons when moving the Vote of Condolence. He told a hushed House how, going down to Osborne on the eve of the Queen's death, he was struck by the vast mass of untouched documents awaiting the coming of Her Majesty. Short as was the interval between her signing the last document and her lying down for her long rest, it was, he said, sufficient to clog the wheels of State administration.

In his official correspondence Mr. Childers preserves many striking proofs of this habit. Queen Victoria was alert on every question of the day, from the dispatch of an army on foreign service to the clothing of the men who composed it, from the selection of a Commander-in-Chief to the distinguishing mark of an Army nurse. On these and all other matters the Queen not only had strong views, but expected them to prevail.

Writing from Windsor Castle on 10th July 1882, Her Majesty said: "As the last telegrams from Egypt lead the Queen to fear that hostilities may break out at any moment, she wishes to learn from Mr. Childers what force it is intended to send to the East in such an event, and whom he con-

templates recommending for the chief command. . . . It must, of course, be conferred on one of the tried officers, assisted by others who have recently been in active service. The Queen wishes to know whom Mr. Childers has thought of, so that she may have time for consideration before being asked for her final decision. Is the transport in an effective state, and have we sufficient horses for performing the duties that will be expected of this branch if an expedition starts?

THE DISMISSAL OF PAM,

The Queen wishes to be fully informed of each step as matters proceed, and to learn confidentially the object and nature of any movement towards the East."

If her Majesty had been *de facto* head of the Army, as she was *de jure*, she could not have been more pertinent or peremptory in her inquiries. The tone of the letter recalls her correspondence with Lord John Russell, which resulted in the dismissal from the Foreign Office of Lord Palmerston, who had in certain despatches presumed to act as if the

young Queen were a mere figure-head. It was understood at the time that the historic letter which squelched Pam was dictated by the Prince Consort. If he was her tutor in the matter the letters from the Queen written nearly thirty years later show he had an apt pupil.

Twelve days later Her Majesty writes from Osborne: "The Queen concludes the Guards will go to Malta in the first instance? She trusts transports, supplies, and a large Hospital Corps with all that is required for the nursing and comfort of sick and wounded will be thought of and provided for. Much as the Queen rejoices to see the rapidity with which the expedition is to be sent she would strongly warn (*sic*) sending them out before all that is required is ready."

In 1880 Sir Garnet Wolseley, primed with lessons dealing with the war in South Africa, was appointed Nothing new under the Sun. Quartermaster-General. With his assistance Mr. Childers preceded Mr. St. John Brodrick on the path of Army Reform, coincidence between the two epochs being further carried by the fact that the present Secretary of State for War's chief helpmate is fresh home from South Africa, the gleaner of costly experience. Queen Victoria entered with great zest into the War Office proposals, studying each one in detail, writing lengthy letters, acutely criticising and offering practical suggestions.

When the war in Egypt in 1882 was over and Arabi *chassé*, Her Majesty wrote a weighty letter from her holiday home in Scotland. "The Queen is especially anxious that no troops should move in a hurry, as she feels convinced no reliance can be placed yet on the Egyptians, who would, if they had a chance of success, again rise. . . . The whole state of Egypt and its future are full of grave difficulties, and we must take great care that short of annexation our position is firmly established there, and that we shall not have to spend precious blood and expend much money for nothing."

If Her Majesty were still alive this letter, with omission of reservation about annexation, might, and probably would, have been addressed to Mr. St. John Brodrick with reference to affairs in South Africa.

It was Queen Victoria who thought of establishing a decoration for nurses employed on active Army service. She remembered how, after the Crimean War, Miss Nightingale and a few of the nurses associated with her received a badge, but that was for a special occasion and was costly. "The badge or cross," wrote her practical Majesty, "need not be of an expensive nature, and might be worn with a ribbon on the shoulder."

The Queen's
Range of
Vision.

One more quotation will show how quick was the Queen's glance, how wide her sympathies. Early in 1884 it became known that the Duke of Marlborough wished to sell his pictures. At this time Mr. Childers, moving from the War Office, had become Chancellor of the Exchequer. There promptly reached him the following note from Osborne:—

"The Queen understands that the Duke of Marlborough is going to sell his pictures and hopes that some of the most important may be bought by the nation."

The hapless Chancellor of the Exchequer, faced by a falling revenue, the charges of two wars, and the certainty of a deficit, did not enthusiastically respond. But the Queen, as usual, had her way.

On the eve of the Easter recess Mr. Arthur Balfour, standing at the

table, lifted his hands
"Intelligent
Interest" in
Supply. in eloquent gesture of
despair at the prospect

before him. There remained only four days for discussion of the Supplementary Estimates, staved off from day to day by what he delicately described as the "intelli-

AN ELOQUENT GESTURE OF
DESPAIR.

gent interest" taken in the Votes by the Irish members. A simple calculation pointed to the conclusion that in further development of that "intelligent interest" fifty-seven divisions

might be taken before Supply was voted and the Appropriation Bill brought in in anticipation of the close of the financial year. As a division takes on the average a quarter of an hour for its completion, it followed that fourteen hours and a quarter, perilously approaching the limit of two ordinary sittings, would be occupied simply in walking round the lobbies.

On the face of it this appears to reduce legislation to absurdity. Its effect spread over a Session is naturally more startling than the limited view taken in **Legislation by Peregrination.** this particular instance by the Leader of the House. The last Session of the old Parliament was exceptionally dull. The Irish members, not yet reorganised on the financial basis introduced in the palmy days of Mr. Parnell, were not in spirits sufficiently high to take an occasional spurt in divisions. The total for the Session footed up to 290, a number that will be far exceeded before the close of the present Session.

That means that of the last Session of the last Parliament of the nineteenth century our legislators spent seventy-two hours, just eight Parliamentary days, in walking round and round the Division Lobbies. Regarded as exercise varying sedentary occupation, the performance has its recommendation. It is not calculated to increase the respect of plain business men for the High Court of Parliament.

The introduction of the closure, an essential condition to doing any work at all in the House of Commons, is itself

The Closure. responsible for increasing the number of divisions.

Occasionally a Government proposal, though obnoxious to a section of the House, may get through without a division. The closure is always divided upon. There are some members who boast that they have religiously fulfilled a vow, registered when the closure was carried, that they would divide upon it, however desirable might be the object it had in view. Thus it comes to pass that, whereas in dealing with an amendment in Committee of Supply one division formerly sufficed, two must now be taken.

It comes about in this way. After much talk the

Minister moves "that the question be now put." It rests with the Speaker to decide whether he shall submit the closure. If he agrees there can be no discussion, the House straightway dividing. When members come back from the Division Lobby, the closure being carried, the question under debate at the time it was moved is submitted and a second division takes place. I have said that two are

LOBBY-SPRINTING—WHAT IT MAY COME TO.

inevitable. If the question before the House be an amendment the divisions may run to three. After the closure has been carried and the amendment negatived, the Speaker puts the main question—that is to say, a particular vote in the Estimates. Whereupon, appetite growing by what it feeds upon, members trudge out for a third lap in the Division Lobbies.

Readers of the country papers, who through the Parliamentary Session open their favourite broad-sheet to find a whole page of speeches delivered in the House on the previous night, cannot realise the situation in this respect as it existed when the Post Office took over the telegraphs. Thirty years ago news, general and Parliamentary, was purveyed by the Electric Telegraph Company. That corporation was the Press Association,

Parliamentary
Reports.

the Central News, and all the rest of them combined. To-day these agencies have large staffs working on a perfected system, ensuring accuracy, fulness, and speed of reporting.

Thirty years ago what was pompously, if not sarcastically, known as The Intelligence Department of the Electric Telegraph Company was composed of four personages. At the head of them was the redoubtable Charles Vincent Boys, who, when the transfer took place, drove with the Post Office a hard bargain from which the Telegraph Department suffers at this day. Incidentally C. V. B. secured for himself a pension on which he snugly lived, dying a year ago in the neighbourhood of his beloved Fleet Street, full of years and honour and good dinners.

The Electric Telegraph Company in his day enjoyed a monopoly. They charged what they pleased for their service, and the rate was so stiff that the wealthiest provincial papers were satisfied with a daily column or two of Parliamentary report. Whether the world was any the worse off by comparison with the present redundancy is an interesting question. To-day, whilst the tendency among the majority of the London papers is to summarise the reports, the country papers let themselves go over a full page report of important debates. Several habitually exceed the length of Parliamentary report supplied by the London morning papers, excepting the *Times*, which in this matter has a special tradition to keep up.

Whatever may be the effect on the intelligence of the public wrought by the cheapening of telegraph rates, there is no doubt it has served appreciably to lengthen Parliamentary proceedings. Most of the wealthy provincial daily papers have their special wire, over which are transmitted full reports of speeches delivered by local members. Formerly these gentlemen, being dismissed with curt paragraphs of the reports in the London papers, and having no special provision made for them by the local journals, did not find it worth while to insist on contributing weighty speeches to current debates. It is different now, and the altered cir-

cumstances are responsible for much loquacity in the dinner-hour at Westminster.

The good old times, with C. V. Boys working the Intelligence Department, aided by three assistants, one a stripling of seventy-three, had its compensations.

CHAPTER XXXVII

JULY

EDWARD VII. happily possesses the unmistakable, but indefinable, gift of being personally interesting. Amongst living monarchs ex-
amples of possession of The King.

this quality or negation of it are severally found in the German Emperor and the King of the Belgians. Among English statesmen, living and of recent times, it will appear upon examination that the attraction is very rare. In the House of Lords the Marquis of Salisbury monopolises it on the Ministerial Bench. On the Opposition side Lord Rosebery, in perhaps even fuller degree, is the sole depository of the secret. On the Treasury Bench of the House of Commons Mr. Arthur Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain exclusively weave the magic spell; whilst on the Front Opposition Bench Sir William Harcourt in this respect sits alone.

A POPULAR FIGURE—
HIS MAJESTY JOHN BULL.

Of past Ministers Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone possessed the mysterious quality in superlative degree.

Since his memorable illness the Prince of Wales has always been popular. He was, of course, in all respects, the same man when, after unusually long chrysalis state, he bloomed into Sovereignty. Nevertheless, the public expected something different, and were not disappointed. The earliest public utterances and actions of the King struck the right note. The homely English mind was pleased by reiteration of affectionate reference to the "beloved mother." It recognised a fine heart and mind in the modest sheltering of the King behind the revered figure of his predecessor on the throne, and in the solemn pledge closely to follow in her footsteps. This satisfaction was confirmed by promulgation of the addresses to "my people" at home and beyond the seas, which in simple, manly language acknowledged the sympathy evoked by the death of the Queen and renewed promise to walk in her ways.

As Prince of Wales, the King in varied circumstances showed himself a born and trained man of business. One of his latest undertakings was the presidency of the Committee of the English Section of the Paris Exhibition. A Man of Business. A member of it, himself the head of a great business enterprise, told me he had learnt something from the manner in which the affairs of the committee were organised and directed from Marlborough House. This quality had full field for its display on the accession of the King. From the very first morning of his reign all the arteries of life in connection with the Crown felt the wholesome impulse of a fresh current. Under the mild domestic dominion of Queen Victoria, the order of things about the Court had fallen into sluggish condition. They were stirred up on the morrow of the Queen's death, and are not likely to relapse.

The King shares with his Imperial nephew a natural leaning towards the regulation of Court ceremonial. Within due bounds he loves pageants, and insists upon having them ordered and carried out with strictest attention to precedent. Within the first fortnight of his reign London, not overstrained with such excitement, beheld two spectacles worthy

its position among the capitals of the world. One was the stately procession that escorted the dead Queen to her last home. The other was the opening of Parliament by the King. There is well-founded expectation that, when the time of mourning shall be accomplished, the promise here given, of varying dull business life with historic pageantry, will be fully redeemed. Edward VII., as has been said, is essentially a business man. He thoroughly understands the business of a King, and may be counted upon to conduct it on the highest plane.

Those who come most closely in contact with His Majesty speak with fullest admiration of his ^{Kindly Tact.}

THE IMPERIAL NEPHEW.

never-failing tact, a priceless gift which has its foundation in kindness of heart. I have personal recollection of an example forthcoming on an occasion when I had the honour of meeting him at dinner. It was a little festival given at the Junior Carlton Club by Lord Randolph Churchill to the then Prince of Wales. The guests were severally presented to His Royal Highness, who, in his pleasant, unaffected manner, conversed with each for a few moments. In fulfilment of this matter-of-course duty he might have talked to me about the weather, or if he had desired to choose a more special and equally familiar topic might have referred to proceedings in Parliament the night before. What he did talk about, with beaming face and hearty laughter, was an article written "From the Cross Benches," published in the *London Observer*, describing Mr. Christopher Sykes's adventures when bringing in a "Bill to Amend the Fisheries (Oysters, Crabs, and Lobsters) Act, 1877."

Newspaper articles of the day before yesterday are like the snow on the river, gone and for ever. It is true Christopher Sykes was an old friend and companion of His Royal Highness, a fact that would dispose him to read the article if it came in his way. But in the careful choice of this far-reaching reminiscence—Lord Randolph's dinner was given early in the Session of 1890; the Christopher Sykes article appeared in May 1884—was testified painstaking effort to give pleasure in a very small matter. It was the same spirit that prompted His Royal Highness to say that, finding the *Observer* on his table on Sunday morning, he always turned first to the "Cross Bench" article.

It is generally assumed that the Sovereign contributes nothing to direct taxation during life, and that at death Royal property passes without the tribute of Side-lights on the Civil List. Death Duties. The latter is, I believe, the fact. But on a portion of her income Queen Victoria certainly paid Income-tax. In each of the last four years of her reign the sum of £2867 was debited to this account in the department of the Lord Steward. Through the same period the Lord Chamberlain paid on the same account £1460 a year, the Master of the Horse £1377, and the Mistress of the Robes £167.

Her late Majesty's annual visits to the Continent ran to a considerable sum. In 1899 it was £4383, exclusive of nearly £1300 expenses incurred by the Master of the Horse. In the same year Her Majesty's autumn visit to Balmoral cost £10,590, her stay at Osborne exceeding £1200. Another charge that fell heavy on the Royal purse was occasioned by the visits of foreign Sovereigns. The King of Siam's call in 1897 cost the Queen £944. The visit of the German Emperor in 1891 accounted for £1766, his later visit in 1899 costing only £465. This is in addition to considerable incidental expenses borne by the State.

A large sum appeared in the estimates voted by the House of Commons on account of the marriages of the Princess Louise and the Duke of York. Queen Victoria

incurred additional charges out of her privy purse, amounting to £575 in one case and £1889 in the other. The late Queen generously bore the costs of the funeral of the Duke of Clarence (£514) and of the Duchess of Teck, which ran up to £680.

There are some increases and some deductions in the King's Household as compared with his Royal mother's.

Our Poet Laureate is still left to draw his £70 a year. But the snug place of the Reader of Windsor Castle, with a salary of £200, has not been filled up under the new reign.

When moving for the appointment of the Civil List Committee the Chancellor of the Exchequer surprised

The Queen's Savings.

the House of Commons by the statement that for some years past the sum provided for the expenses of the Sovereign fell short of the demand, Queen Victoria making up the balance out of her privy purse.

THE POET LAUREATE'S FEE.

This ran directly counter to the popular idea that, owing to the modest way in which the Court was kept, there were considerable savings on the Civil List expenditure. The Ministerial statement and the popular rumour were alike true. For the last eleven years of her reign Queen Victoria found it necessary to draw upon her privy purse to balance expenditure. The sums so appropriated varied from a payment of £4480 in 1892 to a maximum of £17,000 in 1894.

There was in 1887 a special disbursement of £42,602 on account of the Jubilee. Prior to that date, running back to the first year of her reign, there were regular savings of sums so considerable as to amount to £824,025. *Per contra*, the Queen contributed out of these savings to current

expenses £170,256, leaving a balance to the good of the privy purse of £653,769. With compound interest accruing over more than threescore years this handsome sum would assume really magnificent proportions.

It would be difficult to find more striking evidence of the growth of national prosperity during Queen Victoria's long reign than is presented in the accounts of the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster and the ^{The Duchies.} Duchy of Cornwall. The first was the pocket-money of the Queen; the second the perquisite of the Prince of Wales. In 1838, the first complete year of her reign, Queen Victoria drew from the Duchy of Lancaster the sum of £5000. In 1899, the penultimate year of her life, the Queen received, as she had done during the three previous years, the round sum of £60,000.

The first complete year's payment out of the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall paid to the account of the Prince of Wales was £18,579. This was in the year 1843, when His Royal Highness, just past his second year, regarded a thousand pounds here or there with sublime indifference. During his minority the annual revenue accumulated with steady growth, till in 1860 it exceeded £45,000. In 1899, the last year to which accounts were made up, it fell a few pounds short of £67,000.

This princely sum will henceforth be paid to the Duke of Cornwall in addition to the £30,000 a year allotted to himself and the Duchess in the settlement of the Civil List. The revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster go to His Majesty, in supplement of the £470,000 a year voted to the Civil List.

Of the Committee appointed in 1889 to inquire into the former practice of the House of Commons with respect to provision for members of the Royal Family only three sat on the Civil List Committee of the ^{The Civil List Committee of} present year. They were Mr. Labouchere, Mr. ^{1889.} Wharton, and Mr. (now Sir Samuel) Hoare. Of members of the former Committee who still have seats in the House

of Commons are Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Burt, Sir John Gorst, and Mr. John Morley. Two, Mr. Goschen and Lord

Hartington, have gone to the House of Lords. Three have retired from Parliamentary life: Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Sexton, and Mr. Whitbread. Death has been busy with the group. Passed away from consideration of Civil Lists and other mundane matters

MR. LABOUCHERE SITTING ON THE CIVIL LIST.

are Mr. Gladstone, Sir Walter Barttelot, Sir James Corry, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Hussey Vivian, and Mr. W. H. Smith, who presided. He is represented on the Committee of the present year by his son.

The result of this inquiry was a compromise largely due to the wisdom and tact of Queen Victoria. The point was

Queen
Victoria's
Grand-
children.

as to the limit, if any, of the national obligation to provide for the grandchildren of the Sovereign. Mr. Labouchere had a short way of settling the business. He desired the Committee to declare that, apart from the Civil List, in the growing revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster and the Duchy of Cornwall there were ample funds from which provision might be made for the children of the Prince and Princess of Wales. He further asserted that the funds at the disposal of Her Majesty were sufficient to enable her to make provision for her grandchildren by her younger sons and daughters without trenching on the annual expenditure deemed necessary for the honour and dignity of the Crown.

In fine, Mr. Labouchere invited the Committee to record its emphatic opinion that "the cost of the maintenance of

members of the Royal Family is already so great that under no circumstances should it be increased. In its opinion, a majority of Her Majesty's subjects regard the present cost of Royalty as excessive, and it deems it therefore most undesirable to prejudice any decisions that may be taken in regard to this cost by Parliament whenever the entire subject comes under its cognizance, by granting, either directly or indirectly, allowances or annuities to any of the grandchildren of the Sovereign." Only Mr. Burt joined Mr. Labouchere in signing this minority report. Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Morley, and the rest of the Committee agreed in negating it.

The majority report admitted that the Queen would have a claim on the liberality of Parliament, should she think fit to apply for such grants as, according to precedent, might become requisite for the support of the Royal Family. But the Queen made it known that she did not propose to press this claim on behalf of the children of her daughters and her younger sons. With respect to the family of the Prince of Wales the Committee recommended the creation of a special fund by the quarterly payment of £9000 out of the Consolidated Fund. An annual sum of £40,000 was proposed, but, on the motion of Mr. Gladstone, it was reduced to £36,000.

Being authorised only during the reign of Queen Victoria and for a period of six months after her demise, the payment lapsed in July ~~1900~~ 1901

For some years before his death Sir Edward Watkin¹ had withdrawn from the House of Commons. Failing health and advancing years began to tell upon an iron constitution. There came over him an unfamiliar Sir Edward
Watkin. longing for repose. He held a safe seat at Hythe, whether he marched under the Liberal flag or ranged himself in support of a Unionist Government. After experience, going back nearly forty years, he had grown weary of Westminster. The one thing that kept him constant to the Parliamentary post was the hope of carrying a Bill authorising his beloved

¹ Died 1901.

Channel Tunnel. He found a powerful recruit in Mr. Gladstone, who not only time after time voted in favour of the second reading of the Bill, but supported it in luminous speeches. At the same time he was careful to explain that in this matter he merely exercised the privilege of a private member.

In addition to an overwhelming majority in successive Parliaments, the Channel Tunnel had arrayed against it two such doughty opponents as Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Randolph Churchill. Early in the eighties Sir Edward, who was not accustomed to allow the grass to grow under his feet, commenced the works designed to connect, beneath the

BURROWING POWERS--THE LATE SIR EDWARD WATKIN.

silver streak, the Continent and Great Britain. Mr. Chamberlain, at the time President of the Board of Trade, appointed a Departmental Committee to inquire into the project. Meanwhile he issued an edict forbidding further progress with the works. Sir Edward was furious. He confided to me a project he was quite capable of carrying out.

"If," he said, "the Tunnel works are permanently stopped, I will erect on the site at the British end a pillar of stone lofty enough to be seen by ships passing up and down the great water-way."

In fine weather, he mused with undisguised satisfaction, it might be seen from the coast of France. On its front he would have engraved an inscription recording how the works had been visited by the Prince of Wales, by Mr. Gladstone, the Speaker of the House of Commons, peers and commoners

galore ; how, when the great enterprise was fairly started, the works were stopped by " Joseph Chamberlain, of Birmingham."

In the Session of 1888 Sir Edward, undaunted by previous repulses, again moved the second reading of the Bill. Mr. Gladstone came down on a Wednesday afternoon to support it. The Debate is memorable chiefly for a speech contributed by Lord Randolph Churchill.

Replying to the stock argument that in case of war with France the under-sea approach to our island home

THE TUNNEL TERROR.

would be a source of danger, Sir Edward showed how by an electric button pressed in a room in London the British end of the tunnel could be blown up and approach made impracticable. This greatly tickled Lord Randolph's fancy. With dramatic gestures of outstretched forefinger he pictured the members of the Cabinet presided over by Lord Salisbury deciding who was to press the fateful button. On a division a second reading was refused in a full House by nearly two to one. The figures were : for the second reading 165, against 307.

In business relations Sir Edward was an uncompromising

friend, an implacable adversary. When he took a man up, being thoroughly convinced of his capacity, he pushed him along to the highest places. When he fought a man he was as bitterly relentless, as is indicated in the incident of his projected monument to Mr. Chamberlain. Through many years the relative position in the railway world of himself and Mr. J. S. Forbes, of the Chatham and Dover line, were akin to those filled in the political field by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli.

Which railway magnate represented Mr. Gladstone, and which Mr. Disraeli, those familiar with the twain must settle for themselves.

In his private relations Sir Edward was kind-hearted in the extreme, always ready and anxious to serve some one, however humble his position. But he carried the peremptoriness of the Board-room into domestic life. I remember staying with him at the little chalet he built for himself on Snowdon, having in his princely manner purchased one flank of the great Welsh mountain. It was a lovely autumn night, with the stars shining like moons. A large telescope stood on the lawn before the dining-room window. Sir Edward directed his butler to arrange the instrument for the edification of his guests. What he was chiefly anxious for was that we should see and recognise Jupiter.

"Now, Mullet," he said, addressing the butler in sharp tones of command, standing by him as he manipulated the telescope, "where's Jupiter? Come, turn on Jupiter." As if the planet were a soda-water siphon or the plug in the bath-room.

Staying with him another time at Northenden, his old home near Manchester, where he spent many happy years of married life and where he died full of years and honours, he was much distressed at dinner because he could not think of any suitable and sufficient way of entertaining his guests. He came down to breakfast next morning radiant. Lying awake at night burdened with the trouble a happy thought flashed upon him. It was a time when the two great northern lines, competing for Scotch traffic, had each put on

an express service covering the distance from London to Edinburgh in eight hours.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," he said, rubbing his hands gleefully ; "we'll go up to town this afternoon, dine and sleep there ; get up in good time in the morning, go to Edinburgh with the fast train, sleep there ; come back next morning, catching a train that will bring us back here for a late dinner."

He was surprised that this alluring programme was not acclaimed. For himself he was as comfortable in a railway carriage as in an arm-chair in his dining-room. He used to say that the safest place in the world was a railway carriage travelling over a well-laid road at a speed of fifty miles an hour.

Sir Edward had his faults of temper, occasionally perhaps of taste. But he was of the class that have made England great. In public he said some harsh things ; in private he did many kind ones.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

AUGUST

ON his installation the new Bishop of London had his experience enlarged in the field of fees. It is a high honour

to be selected ^{Fleeing the}
for a seat on ^{Chosen of the}
the Episcopal ^{Flock.}

Bench. The honour bestowed, it seems the most natural thing in the world to take the seat and there an end on't. But that is only the beginning of it. As every one knows, whilst the gift of a Bishopric rests with the Prime Minister, the nominee is elected by the Dean and Chapter.

THE BISHOP'S BILL—"DEAR ME! LONDON'S
A DREADFULLY EXPENSIVE PLACE."

Virtually by command of the Sovereign, the Crown Office issues a *congé d'élire*.

This means money, which has to come out of the Bishop's pocket. The warrant costs £10; the certificate, £16:10s.; letters patent, £30; the docquet, 2s. The Dean and Chapter, having duly elected the nominee of the Prime Minister, return the name to the Crown Office, and the Royal Assent is signified.

This involves duplication of the charges, with the difference that the cost of the certificate is increased by 10s. to make it even money.

Next follows a process known as restitution of temporalities. In pursuance of this duty the new Bishop is fined £10 for the warrant, £31:10:6 for the certificate, £30 for letters patent, and the inevitable 2s. for the docquet, a hardship only partially lightened by spelling the word with a "q" and a "u." These sums disbursed, the new Bishop reasonably thinks he may retire to his palace, if the See provides one. But the Home Office next steps on the scene and demands Exchequer fees. The *congé d'élire*, already handsomely paid for, means another £7:13:6. Equal sums are demanded for letters recommendatory, Royal Assent, and restitution of temporalities. The oath of homage is thrown in for £6:6:6. Next comes the Board of Green Cloth demanding £15:0:2 (what was it Mr. Mantalini said about the coppers?), being homage fees to be distributed among the heralds and the Earl Marshal.

On the Bishop taking his seat in the House of Lords, gentlemen in the Lord Great Chamberlain's Office fob £5. The Cathedral bell-ringers get £10:10s. for jubilation on the ceremony of enthronisation, the choir being paid £6:17:4. On the same happy occasion the Precentor draws £10:10s. and the chapter clerk £9:14:8, this last in addition to £21:6:8, his fees on the Bishop's election. The Archbishop's officers are not backward in coming forward to congratulate the new Bishop. The Secretary bringing the Archbishop's fiat for confirmation collars £17:10s. The Vicar-General draws fees on confirmation amounting to £31:0:10, with £10:5s. to spend on the church where the ceremony takes place. Nine guineas go to the Deputy-Registrar as fees on mandate of induction, the customary fee to the Bishop's secretaries payable on such occasion being £36:5s.

The clerk at the Crown Office is fain to be satisfied with a humble gratuity of half a guinea, less than you would tip your boy at Eton or Harrow. But this moderation is

only apparent. He pockets two guineas for what he calls petty expenses, and when the Bishop takes his seat in the House of Lords he claims no less than £14.

The total amount of fees payable on entering a bishopric, made up of these quaint details, is £423:19:2. Curates for whom the Episcopal Bench is on the distant, peradventure unapproachable, horizon, will recognise, with secret pleasure, that the high estate has its drawbacks.

In parish annals there is a well-known story of a gifted clerk on the occasion of the

APPROACHING THE DEAN AND CHAPTER.

visit of the Bishop giving out a paraphrased version of the hymn :—

Why skip ye so, ye little hills, and wherefore do ye hop?
Is it because you're glad to see His Grace the Lord Bi-shop?

There can be no doubt skipping and hopping (figuratively, of course) go on at the Crown Office, the Home Office, the Office of the Lord Great Chamberlain, in the Archbishop's offices, in the precincts of the Dean and Chapter, and eke at the Board of Green Cloth, when a new Bishop is nominated. The exercise is more vigorous when an Archbishop comes to the throne, since in his case the fees are doubled.

In one of Lord Beaconsfield's last appearances in the House of Lords it seemed for a while that personal collision was imminent. Towards the close of an important debate

Lord Granville presented himself at the table to fulfil the appointed duty of Leader of the Opposition, winding up debate from his side of the House, to be followed in due course by the Premier. At the same moment Lord Beaconsfield rose, and began a speech. Lord Granville, gentlest and most courteous of men, found this more than he could stand. He angrily protested, seemed for a while inclined to insist on his right, but finally gave way.

Lord Beacons-
field's
Dilemma.

A year later, when Lord Beaconsfield was at final rest, Lord Granville told the secret history of the strange incident. In anticipation of making a speech at a particular hour the Premier had administered to himself a medical stimulant calculated to keep him going for the necessary hour he would be on his legs. The debate was unexpectedly prolonged. The time had come when he must speak, and speak he did. Lord Granville took the opportunity of expressing his profound regret that, ignorant of the tragic necessity that environed the aged Premier, he had even for a moment stood in his way.

WOUND UP AND TIMED.

The most striking illustration of the absolute helplessness of the House of Lords in the absence of Standing Orders such as govern debate in the Commons is within the memory of many now seated in the Chamber.

Rather Mixed.

The second reading of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill being put down for a certain Monday, a noble lord resident in Scotland prepared an elaborate speech and set out for London. Timing his journey so as to reach Euston shortly after noon, he missed connection with the London train, and found it impossible to be at Westminster till the next day. On arriving at the House of Lords he learned that the first

business was a resolution on the subject of opening museums on a Sunday. He had with him the manuscript of his precious speech on the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. It was too good to be lost. He might, of course, save it till next year, when the hardy annual would reappear. But life is uncertain; there is no time like the present.

Accordingly, when the noble lord in charge of the resolution on the Opening Museums on Sundays had made an end of speaking, the noble baron, who holds historic rank in the peerage of Scotland, followed, and delivered his speech on the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. The Lord Chancellor sat aghast on the Woolsack. The few peers present moved restlessly in their seats and deprecatingly coughed. No one had power to stop the bold baron, who went on to the uttermost sentence.

When Mr. Stansfeld was driven out of office in connection with the Mazzini incident, Lord Palmerston offered Mr. Childers office as Junior Lord of the Admiralty. Always a business man, the young member for Pomfret, undazzled by the opening, consulted his ledger, and found that, consequent upon necessary resignations of company directorships, acceptance of the post would involve a sacrifice of £2100 a year. After some hesitation, finding it would be permissible to retain some of his salaried directorships, he on that condition accepted the post.

A Debit and
Credit
Account.

THE LATE MR. STANSFELD
AND MAZZINI.

This concession was communicated in a letter from Mr. Brand, then Whip of the Liberal Party, afterwards Speaker of the House of Commons. It is valuable as an authority upon an ever-recurring question.

"Lord Palmerston," Mr. Brand wrote, "desires me to

say he sees no objection to a member of the Government retaining other employment, provided that employment can be carried on without prejudice to the Queen's Service, which has the paramount claim. Subject to that rule, he leaves it to you to determine what class of business you may, as a member of the Government, properly retain. He thinks that the rule should be applied with strictness to foreign undertakings."

This is a pretty generous construction of the problem, quite in keeping with Pam's easy-going disposition. It will be remembered it was by a breach of the one imperative condition that poor Lord Henry Lennox came to grief. If, in spite of all temptation, he had never become a director of the Lisbon Tramways Co. he might have shared to the end the spoils of his friend Mr. Disraeli's victory at the polls of 1874.

THE LATE LORD HENRY LENNOX.

I have come across a little volume of rare interest. To give it its full title it is: *The Royal Calendar or Complete and Correct Annual Register for England, Scotland, Ireland, and America for the year 1801*. A principal feature is a list of members of the eighteenth Parliament of Great Britain summoned to meet for their first Session in September 1796. "Printed for J. Debrett, Piccadilly," it is the progenitor of the volume known to later generations as "Dod."

Looking down the list of members sitting in the House of Commons exactly a hundred years ago, I am struck by recurrence of names familiar in the House sitting to-day and in others that have immediately preceded it. There is Nisbet Balfour, a Lieutenant-General in the Army, Colonel of the 39th Regiment. He shared the representation of Arundel with a member of the family name of the member for Shrewsbury, and of an even better known Mr. Greene

who had a seat in the Parliament of 1874. There is a Samuel Whitbread and a Robert John Buxton, who both had kinsmen sitting in the last Parliament, one still on the Front Opposition Bench.

When George III. was King there was in the House of Commons a John Lubbock, banker, in London, as there was through many years of the reign of Queen Victoria. Also there was a Benjamin Hobhouse and a James Stuart Wortley, Recorder of the borough of Boffiney, Cornwall, for which he sat at Westminster. We have a Stuart Wortley in the House to-day. But where is the borough of Boffiney, which a hundred years ago returned two members to Parliament? There is a John Whitmore, a Charles Sturt, a Robert Manners, a Michael Hicks-Beach, forebear of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who a hundred years ago represented Cirencester, and lived at Williamstrip Park, Gloucestershire. There is a Cavendish Bentinck, whereas a recent Parliament had two, familiarly known as "Big Ben" and "Little Ben," both gone over to the majority. There is a Robert Curzon, not of the family of the Viceroy of India, but a progenitor of the popular Ministerial Whip, Lord Randolph Churchill's brother-in-law, who last Session left the Commons to take his seat in the Upper House.

The earlier days of the century saw a Sir Henry Fletcher in the House of Commons, as did its closing term. There was John Lowther, Charles Villiers, of course Sir Watkin Williams Wynn; Lord George Cavendish, only brother of the Duke of Devonshire; Copley Ashley, brother of Lord Shaftesbury; Edward Bouverie, Thomas Wyndham, Sir Edward Knatchbull, a Sam Smith unfamiliar with modern music-halls, knowing nothing of Piccadilly at midnight; William Montagu Scott, who never dreamed a lineal descendant among members of the House of Commons would call himself Scott Montagu and drive a motor-car; Charles Long, of Trinton Hall, Suffolk; Thomas Manners Sutton, Lord Chancellor of Ireland in 1807; Sir Matthew White Ridley, representing Newcastle-on-Tyne; Charles Shaw-Lefevre, another name later on connected with the Speaker's Chair;

Lionel Damer, to whom sixty years after succeeded Dawson Damer, whose eccentricities occasionally disturbed the Parliament of 1874; Edward Stanley; Leveson Gower; Lord William Russell, youngest brother of the Duke of Bedford; Simon Harcourt; William Brodrick, Secretary to the East India Board; John Henry Petty, son of the Marquis of Lansdowne; Lord John Douglas Campbell, second son of the Duke of Argyll.

Amongst members of this Parliament whose names live in history was Spencer Perceval, who at that time held no higher post than the extinct one, doubtless carrying a good salary, of Surveyor of the Meltings and Clerk of the Irons in the Mint. In 1809 he became Prime Minister, and was done to death by Bellingham, who shot him as he entered the Lobby of the House on 11th May 1812.

George Canning, member for Wendover, Bucks, was Joint Paymaster of the Forces, a Commissioner for the Affairs of India, and Receiver-General of the Alienation Office, a post long ago alienated from connection with the Exchequer in the way of salary. Charles Fox was seated for the City of Westminster; whilst the Right Hon. Henry Temple, Viscount Palmerston, LL.D., sat for Winchester, "PAM" AS A WINCHESTER BOY. living during the Session at East Sheen; through the recess at his later more famous country seat, Broadlands. William Wilberforce, not yet having tackled the slavery question, sat for Yorkshire, a broad area, whose representation he shared with Henry Lascelles, son of Lord Harewood.

Considerable variation in the amount of Ministerial salaries has taken place in the past century. The Secretary

of State for Foreign Affairs, a hundred years ago Lord Grenville, was paid at the rate of £2500 a year, against the £5000 Lord Lansdowne to-day receives. Mr. Dundas, Secretary of State for War, had £2000 a year, against Mr. Brodrick's £5000. On the other hand, the Duke of Portland, Home Secretary, drew £6000 against Mr. Ritchie's five. There was then no Secretary of State for India, but Mr. Dundas, President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, received £2000. William Pitt did exceedingly well in the matter of salaries. As First Lord of the Treasury he received £4000. As Chancellor of the Exchequer he had another £1800, whilst as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports he had not only Walmer Castle for a residence, but a payment of £3000 a year to maintain it.

SESSION 1902

CHAPTER XXXIX

FEBRUARY

OBSTRUCTION certainly has much to boast of in its influence on the opening Session of the first Parliament of the twentieth century. With a pinchbeck Parnell Old Style and New. in command, a rank-and-file mediocre by comparison with the brilliant Irishman who made things lively at Westminster from 1875 into the early eighties, the performance of last Session is, from a pictorial and rhetorical point of view, a little flat. In actual effect it will bear comparison with the more striking campaigns through which Mr. Joseph Gillis Biggar lived. Mr. Redmond's tactics, to some extent compelled by reforms already established by the procedure rules, widely differ from Mr. Parnell's. His object is to avoid dramatic scenes, to flout the authority of the Chair as far as is safe, avoiding penalty by swift subsidence and prompt apology at the very moment when the Speaker is about to rise and exert such authority as he is invested with. This is not magnificent, but it is effective war.

Not many scenes disturbed the progress of last Session. Yet the amount of work done was exceedingly small. Two unheroic but effective weapons were ever The Plague of Questions. in the hands of the Irish members. One was the putting of questions ; the other, insistence on hopeless divisions. Last year the House sat on 118 days, little more

than half the duration of the Session of 1893-94, which numbered 226 days. Nevertheless, thirty-two more divisions were taken, the number of questions being diminished by only eighty-six.

As to questions, 6448 were handed in at the table and appeared on the Notice Paper, printed at the expense of the tax-payer. That is an inadequate statement of the operation of this deliberate trifling with public time. There were few nights during which the number of questions on the paper was not at least doubled by what are known as

THE IRISH SECRETARY AND QUESTIONS.

"supplementary questions." It is safe to say that during last Session at least 12,000 questions were addressed to Ministers, of which probably 1000 were designed with the honest purpose of obtaining information useful to the public service. The triviality of the rest unfortunately does not mitigate their obnoxiousness. Not only do they take time in the putting and answering. They involve much labour in the departments concerned, where particulars have to be hunted up and replies prepared for the Ministers to read at the table.

Among claims to perform certain offices in connection

with the Coronation the Court appointed by His Majesty found none more quaint than that of the Barons of the Cinque Ports. They asserted the right to ^{The} ~~Coronation.~~ carry a canopy over the Sovereign in the procession through Westminster Hall, and afterwards to sit at a table spread on his right hand at the Coronation Banquet. The privilege is enshrined in a charter signed by Edward I. But it is much older. When Henry III. married Eleanor, daughter of Hugh Earl of Provence, the bold Barons from the Cinque Ports, arrayed in purple silk and fine linen, carried aloft the canopy under which the young Queen stepped on her passage through Westminster Hall. The claim, duly considered, has been disallowed, and a picturesque by-play, carrying a prosaic century back to Plantagenet times, will never more be seen in London.

These "Honours at Court," as the business is styled in the charters of the Ports, were conceded within the lifetime of some who will read of the Coronation of King Edward VII. When, on the 19th July 1821, George IV. was crowned, the Barons of the Cinque Ports played a brave part in the pageant. There were fifteen in all, representing Sandwich, Hastings, Hythe, Rye, Winchelsea, Romney, and Dover. There should have been sixteen, but Henry Brougham, Baron for the Port of Winchelsea, begged off. He had a short time previously taken a prominent part in the trial of Queen Caroline. When informed of the distinguished honour awaiting him on Coronation Day the future Lord Chancellor wrote intimating that "in the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed he felt himself under the necessity of most respectfully soliciting permission to decline the distinguished honour of canopy-bearer."

Happily for posterity there were, in addition to the Barons, the two solicitors to the Ports, John Shipden and William Fowle. These, in their professional capacity, accompanied the Barons, and wrote a ^{The Barons'} ~~March on~~ ^{London.} detailed account of their adventures in London, which was discreetly withheld from the cognisance of the

Court of Claims. The document was a short time ago found among the musty archives of the Borough of Hythe. The reading well rewards the trouble of deciphering the faded handwriting. A few days before the Coronation the Barons foregathered at the Thatched House Tavern, in St. James's Street, and arranged their plan of campaign. Although on business of State bent they were of frugal mind. Prepared to carry the canopy, they were not disposed to bear its expense. They were, therefore, the more punctilious in describing the article which, according to ancient usage, became their property at the close of the proceedings. They cited ancient ordinances, testifying that the canopy should be wrought of gold or purple silk, upon four silver staves. Each staff had four corners, and at each corner there hung a silver bell, gilt with gold. "Which canopy, staves and bells, the said Barons who bear them have been accustomed to have and take as their own fee for the said services." Moreover, they claimed the right of dining at a table in the Great Hall of Westminster when the King and Queen dine, at the right hand of the King and Queen, and to have cloth for vestments at the King's expense.

A long interval followed, silence falling on the scene after despatch of their formal demand. Letters were written to the Earl Marshal, to the Home Secretary, and to the Lord High Chamberlain, pointing out that "the day for the Coronation is fast approaching, and as we have received no positive answer on the subject of the Barons' Table, we are naturally in a state of great anxiety and suspense." At one of the meetings an exceptionally bold Baron proposed to pass a resolution to the effect that unless the Barons have their full rights and privileges as admitted by the Court of Claims they will be compelled to decline the canopy service altogether. This was alluring. But a more puny Baron suggesting that possibly the opening thus proffered would be promptly seized and they shunted altogether, the subject dropped.

It all came right in the end, except that the Barons were

obliged to pay for their own vestments. These were fearfully and wonderfully made. To begin with, there were white kid shoes, above which flamed crimson silk hose, with rosettes at the knee. To a scarlet satin doublet with gold twist buttons and braidings were hung scarlet satin sleeves, with cuffs ornamented with gold twist braidings and rosettes. A laced frill round the collar of the doublet was surmounted by a full standing muslin ruff. The trunk hose was of purple satin, with scarlet satin strappings bordered with gold twist. A tunic of purple satin and scarlet silk lining, with purple satin robings, was suspended from each shoulder. This gorgeous array was crowned by a black velvet Spanish hat, with one scarlet and two black ostrich feathers turned up in front by gold twist looped and buttoned. For all arms the Barons wore a dress sword thrust in a purple velvet belt.

At the close of fourscore years the mind lingers fondly over the picture of Henry Brougham temporarily casting aside his famous check suit and donning this array. Possibly consciousness of what was in store for him in this direction, rather than any pricking of conscience in the matter of Queen Caroline, induced him to decline the nomination.

LORD BROUGHAM AS A BARON
OF THE CINQUE PORTS.

At five o'clock on the morning of the Coronation the Barons met at Somerset House, and having, with the assistance of their retainers, got into these wondrous clothes, they entered their barge and were rowed to Westminster Hall. There their troubles commenced. In vain had the solicitors importuned the authorities for

Canny King
George.

permission to have a rehearsal of the duty assigned them. Not one of them had ever assisted in the carrying of a canopy. What if, upheld by unaccustomed hands, it should, at a critical moment, come down on the Royal pate? Cold perspiration stood on the Barons' brows as they contemplated this contingency. One of the officers in attendance, acquainted with their dilemma, suggested that as the day was

THE BOLD BARONS AND THE CANOPY.

yet young they might trot up and down Westminster Hall with the canopy. This they did, but the galleries being already filled, their struggles with the canopy attracted such embarrassing measure of attention that after staggering about with it for a few minutes they discreetly set it down and withdrew from observation.

When in due time the Royal procession was formed and the Barons came along with their canopy, King George IV.,

feeling that his life was too precious to the nation to be unnecessarily imperilled, insisted on walking in advance of them. If any accident happened it would be more easy to fill a vacancy in the Primacy, at the Home Office, or in the Office of the Lord High Chamberlain. The Barons, who were getting along pretty well considering the heat of the day and their new clothes, showed themselves somewhat piqued at this lack of confidence. His Majesty noting this, and concluding that things were pretty safe, on the return from the service in the Abbey unflinchingly walked under the canopy.

What in this century is alluded to as a regrettable incident occurred at the banquet. The Barons found their promised table duly set in its consecrated position. Neither bit nor sup had passed their lips since five o'clock in the morning. Their struggles with the canopy had increased healthy appetite. Making a rush for their chairs they found one occupied by a stranger. They assured him there was a mistake somewhere. The table was allotted to them, in proof of which they showed him on the back of each of the fifteen chairs the legend, "Baron of the Cinque Ports." The stranger made light of a Baron of the Cinque Ports. For himself he was, he said, a Master in Chancery, was very hungry, and meant to stay where he was. The descendants and representatives of the founders of the English Navy were not to be trifled with. "They were," the report remarks with creditable reticence, "compelled to exercise a considerable degree of firmness and decision before they could displace him."

An Intruder.

Soothed with meat and drink, the Barons began to think of their canopy, with its precious equipment of silver bells, purple silk, and silver staves. Before tackling the Master in Chancery they had deposited their precious burden in charge of attendants in the Hall. They were not a moment too soon in rushing to the rescue. The Philistines were upon the precious treasure, and were hacking off odd bits. The Barons, making a gallant rush, scattered them, and seizing what was left of the canopy carried it into sanctuary.

This was first sought in the House of Commons, but, manœuvre how they might, they could not get the thing through the doorway. It seemed as if they must sit up all night with the canopy, a prospect little attractive in view of their early rising and arduous day's work. Happily the British Constitution affords a last appeal in the House of Lords. Thither the Barons bore their precious burden, and to their great delight found they could wriggle it in. There it was left for the night, the solicitors first removing the bells, which, as they write, "being very portable, were too hazardous to be left."

It was ten o'clock at night before the Barons wended their way homewards. They were up bright and early the next morning, and, conveying the canopy to the Thatched House, divided the spoil. The rich purple silk, the gold cloth, and the framework of the canopy were divided into sixteen parts, one assigned to each of the fifteen Barons. They drew lots for the silver staves and the gilded bells. The remaining sixteenth part, which should have fallen to the lot of Mr. Brougham, was very properly allotted to the solicitors, whose services to the Cinque Ports and the State it would be impossible to overestimate.

CHAPTER XL

MARCH

COMPLAINT is sometimes made by admirers of Sir William Harcourt—and they sit on both sides of the House—that so habile a debater, so witty a conversationalist, Written
Speeches. should hamper himself with voluminous notes when he makes an important speech. That the precaution is not necessary is proved when on chance provocation he flings himself into debate. Sir William defends his practice upon clearly defined principles. He affirms that no speech delivered extemporaneously survives the week of its birth. All great orators, from Demosthenes, past Burke down to—well, to John Bright, have always first written out their speeches, then committed them to memory, and, possibly with the assistance of skilfully condensed notes, recited them.

SIR W. HARCOURT'S NOTES.

Going down to Lancashire in 1868 as a kind of under-

study to John Bright, Sir William, not yet launched in politics, prospering richly at the Parliamentary Bar, had opportunity of observing the Master's oratorical manner. When he delivered one of the speeches illuminating the historical campaign that first placed Mr. Gladstone in power, he brought with him to the platform some eight, ten, or a dozen small cards, held in the palm of his left hand. Each contained headings of a division of his speech. At the top a catch-word or two, opening the leading sentence. His peroration, ever a carefully prepared effect, was written out verbatim.

Sir William admits that, except in supreme cases—such as that of John Bright, where, as far as actual evidence went, the machinery of the MS. is practically out of sight of the audience—the immediate effect of an unstudied speech is greater than what follows on recitation of a carefully prepared oration. But he holds the congregation before him, be it large or small, as a secondary concern compared with the multitude listening at the doors. For that wider circle, peradventure for posterity, it is worth while to take pains with a speech. Composing one in the quietness and solitude of the study has, he insists, a double advantage. It not only enables a man to place in effective order his line of argument, causing him to say what he has to say in the best form of words. It delivers him from the danger lurking in the heat of extemporaneous speaking, of saying what he had better have left unsaid.

These, the slowly-formed opinions of one of the greatest Parliamentary and platform speakers of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, compel respectful attention.

Hang
Posterity. Having given it, I do not think a statesman of to-day need trouble himself much as to what posterity will think of the speech he is contemplating. Most of us probably have in our bookcases the speeches of Burke and Bright. I am not sure we frequently find time to read them. Sufficient to the day are the speeches thereof. With respect to the Man in the Street (who has perforce remained there whilst a speech was delivered in Parliament or on the plat-

form) it is undoubtedly an advantage that an address should be prepared on Sir William Harcourt's plan. As far as the immediate audience is concerned and the effect wrought upon it is valued, an imperfect speech flashed forth in the heat of the moment is worth far more than a perfect oration painstakingly produced in the study. This is more especially the case in debate in the House of Commons, where, indeed, the reading of written speeches is considerably, but not always effectively, forbidden.

Mr. Disraeli prepared his great oratorical efforts with the painstaking care that marks the system of his former young friend, Mr. Vernon Harcourt. There was a ^{Some modern} gentleman on the Parliamentary staff of the *Times* ^{Instances.} who had a good deal to do with Mr. Disraeli's platform triumphs. When preparing for one he invited Mr. Neilson to stay with him, whether at Hughenden or his town address, and rehearsed his speech. The first draft, taken down in shorthand, was studied by the master of impromptus, here and there fresh effects tried, and, finally, the whole thing was fairly written out before Mr. Disraeli stepped on the platform. Mr. Neilson, following the MS. before him, made such verbal alterations, addenda, or elimination as circumstances demanded for his report.

"REHEARSING."

This was very well at certain political crises. But those familiar with Disraeli's manner in the House of Commons after he assumed the Leadership will remember how dreary were long stretches of his speech when they passed beyond the limits of an hour; how pointed and potent his contributions to debate wrapped within the limits of twenty minutes.

When Mr. Gladstone was called upon for sustained effort, on explaining one of his Budgets or in introducing one of his epoch-making Bills, he necessarily **Mr. Gladstone.** had more or less voluminous notes. But they were the meagre skeleton of his oration, head-lines pointing to division of subject or containing rows of figures. He never read a sentence, much less a passage, from the MS. Some of his most delightful House of Commons speeches were delivered on Tuesday or Friday evening, when private members still had the privilege of moving resolutions or pressing forward Bills. At such times, leaning on the desk, he, without raising his voice beyond conversational pitch, chatted to the charmed circle. On more important occasions, when a sudden turn had twisted debate, he was accustomed to spring up obviously, necessarily, without a moment's preparation and pour forth a torrent of persuasive argument.

Towards the end of last Session a rumour ran through the House of Commons that the King intended to pay a visit to Westminster, and was expected to look in at the House of Lords during the course of the sitting. Nothing came of it, and what was looked forward to as a notable spectacle was withheld from the gaze of spectators.

**The King
and
Parliament.** Some denied the probability of the rumour being verified on the ground that it would be unconstitutional for the Sovereign to be present in either House of Parliament whilst debate was going forward. That may be so; but there is certainly precedent for such procedure. Charles II. frequently sat in the House of Lords whilst debate was going forward. "It was," he graciously said, "better than going to a play," which suggests that noble lords were livelier in Stuart days than in these degenerate times. Writing in 1670, when the Merry Monarch dropped in on the peers, not even hoping he did not intrude, Andrew Marvell observes: "It is true this has been done long ago. But it is now so old that it is new, and so disused that at any other but so bewitched a time as this it would have been looked on as a high usurpation and breach of privilege."

The last time King Charles was present at debate in the House of Lords was in the Session of 1680. The sturdy Commons had passed a Bill excluding the Duke of York from reversion to the throne on the ground that he was a Papist. The House of Lords, after a fashion not unknown in modern times, flouting the deliberate purpose of the representatives of the people, threw out the Bill. The King sat out the debate, enjoying it so much that he not only dined in the House, but stayed for supper.

Whilst still Prince of Wales, Edward VII. showed keen and abiding interest in Parliamentary debate. Twenty years ago, when the Parnellites were in full force, he rarely passed a week without spending an hour or two in the Gallery over the clock.

Of late years, the House of Commons becoming portentously dull under the wet blanket of an overwhelming Ministerial majority, His Royal Highness was an infrequent visitor to the House of Commons. But if in town he rarely missed an important debate in the Lords. He never took part in debate, nor voted in any division save one. Exception was made in favour of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, in whose favour His Royal Highness always voted, occasionally presenting a petition on its behalf.

Whilst it is not probable that His Majesty will recur to the practice of Charles II. and attend debates in the Lords, he may be counted upon to bring closer the personal relations between the Sovereign and Parliament which lapsed through long stages of the last reign. He will not only regularly open Parliament in person, but will doubtless revive the custom in vogue when Queen Victoria came to the throne of proroguing it without the agency of a Royal Commission.

I hear from one who speaks with authority (not, like myself, one of the scribes) that the amount of personalty left by Queen Victoria did not exceed £800,000. This will be a shock to the slowly built-up convictions of those who regarded her late Majesty as one of the richest Sovereigns in Europe. It

Queen
Victoria's
Private
Fortune.

certainly is at variance with conclusions founded on acknowledged facts. When, on the Queen's Accession, the Civil List was settled it was based on a most liberal estimate. To a Committee of the House of Commons were remitted the accounts of income and expenditure of the Civil List of William IV. in the last full year of his reign. The charges incurred in various departments were gone through, and with slight variations the aggregate sum was allotted for the Civil List of the Girl-Queen.

How this worked is illustrated by the vote for the Lord Chamberlain's department. The Committee discovered that tradesmen's bills paid by the Lord Chamberlain amounted exactly to £41,898. William IV.'s successor being a lady they chivalrously made the sum the round figure of £42,000. In the way of addition that was quite immaterial. But as appears on the face of the accounts, the expenditure in this particular department was quite exceptional. William IV., looking forward to further length of years, spent large sums on renovating his residence. Exceptional expenditure, divided amongst upholsterers, cabinetmakers, locksmiths, ironmongers, joiners, and the like, amounted to over £20,000. By the action of the House of Commons Committee that sum was permanently allotted as additional annual subsidy to the Lord Chamberlain's department under the new Sovereign.

Embarrassment of riches—afflicting other departments when, on the death of the Prince Consort, Queen Victoria retired into private life—was averted by an ingenious automatic arrangement. It was ordered that wherever surpluses presented themselves in particular departments the money should be handed over to the keeper of the Privy Purse. The sum, whatever its varying amount might be, was during the twenty years after the death of the Prince Consort, when ceremonial usages involving expenditure specially provided were abrogated, added to the £60,000 a year allotted by the Civil List to the Queen's Privy Purse.

In 1873 the swelling of many rivulets leading into this reservoir became so embarrassing that a special Act of

Parliament was passed for its relief. Under the Statute law then existing the Sovereign was precluded from holding hereditary property.

The case is succinctly and authoritatively stated by Sir George Cornwall Lewis, Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1857.

Supporting a vote for a dowry for the Princess Royal, Sir George did so on

the specific ground that the nation had of its wisdom deprived the Queen of a parent's opportunity for making such provision. "It has been deemed a

matter of policy in this country," said Sir George, "to strip and denude the Sovereign of all hereditary property, and to render him during his life entirely dependent upon the bounty of Parliament." In 1873 Mr. Gladstone changed all that, adding to the Statute-book what was called "The Crown Private Estates Act." This enabled the Sovereign to invest his or her savings after the manner of the private citizen.

after Lush 1857

SIR GEORGE CORNEWALL LEWIS.

CHAPTER XLI

APRIL

SOMETIMES, as when one night last Session the Irish members, blundering into open conflict with the Chair, were carried out by the police *vi et armis*, we hang our heads and murmur that the Mother of Parliaments exceeds all her children in disgraceful conduct. There is, therefore, a certain comfort in contemplating the Austro-Hungarian Reichsrath. That occasionally excels all else on the same lines, not excepting a meeting of Irish members in Committee-room No. 15 rehearsing proceedings in a Home Rule Parliament.

Mr. Biggar once made a speech four hours long—four hours all but ten minutes. This achievement beats the record in the House of Commons. Mark Twain tells me that four years ago, when he was sojourning in Vienna, he attended a sitting of the Reichsrath which lasted for thirty-three hours, during which a member spoke for twelve hours. Mr. Biggar's achievement was made possible by the dreary, sometimes inaudible, reading of a Blue-book. The German deputy's speech was, according to the American stranger in the gallery, a skilfully-constructed argument supported by felicitous illustrations.

The occasion was an attempt by the Government to advance by an imperatively necessary stage a Bill continuing the settlement between Austria and Hungary. The Opposition resolved to bring about a crisis by obstruction, and the

deputy's twelve-hour monologue was a contribution towards that end. The main body of the Opposition obliged with a running commentary, in which such phrases as "contemptible cub," "word-of-honour-breaker," "Jew," "East German offal-tub," "scoundrel," "blackguard," and even our own "Judas" --signal for an ever-memorable row on the floor of the House of Commons--were flung about. The President

CARRYING MR. FLAVIN OUT.

being of Polish birth was in comparative intervals of silence saluted as "Polish dog." One statesman invented a new legislative process. Each member of the Reichsrath is provided with a desk with a removable cover that may at will be extended. Withdrawing this, the member began beating the lid on the top of his desk, an example speedily followed, with deafening results.

Meanwhile the hapless President contributed to the

uproar the impotent ringing of his bell. He has absolutely no power to order the removal of a recalcitrant member, or by other means preserve decorum in debate. That would be bad enough in the House of Commons, still imbued, as the majority of its members are, with respect for traditions and a wholesome fear of public opinion outside. With a body composed as is the Austrian Reichsrath the impotence of the Chair is a superfluous invitation to disorder. The 425 deputies who form the Chamber are drawn from a score of States all hating each other for love of the Emperor.

In the House of Commons a Welsh member once concluded his speech by a passage delivered in his native tongue. Last Session an Irish member imitated the flash of humour. The Austrian Reichsrath is filled by excitable men representing nations that speak eleven distinct languages. Apart from nationalities the various political parties into which the Chamber is split—German Nationalists, Young Czechs, Progressists, Clericals, Christian Socialists, Social Democrats—each fights for its own hand. The only effort in which common action may be expected is when a row is got up with design to obstruct the business of the day.

WILLIE REDMOND CATCHES
SIGHT OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

Let us humbly think of these things when Mr. Flavin is carried forth by the police, or when Mr. W. Redmond gurgles inconsequent but not flattering remarks as he accidentally catches sight of Mr. Chamberlain.

Lord Onslow tells me a charming story of his experience as Governor of New Zealand. Visiting a remote district, he entered the village hall with intent to perform whatever

function was to the fore. As he stepped on the platform the familiar strains of "God Save the Queen" greeted Her Majesty's representative. The ^{Irrepressible.} whole audience rose to their feet, the Governor and the magnates on the platform also standing in reverential attitude. The sound of the instrument was unfamiliar in this connection. The music was not uplifted from a drum and fife band or wrung out of a barrel-organ, though its strains somewhat resembled those emitted by that instrument of torture.

When the tune had been got through, the gathering on the platform and in the body of the hall rustled into their seats. Suddenly, to the consternation of everybody, there was an ominous click, and "God Save the Queen" started again from the commencement. Thinking there was some mistake the audience rose again, respectfully standing till the second round was concluded. Again reseating themselves, the click was repeated, and so was "God Save the Queen."

This was too much, and none knew how much more there might be. The anguished Mayor diving under the table produced a large box which he handed to a fellow-townsmen, who, wrapping a tablecloth round it, hurried from the room.

It was a musical-box, thoughtfully provided for the occasion. The machinery had got out of order, and being wound up it was bound to play the same tune till the springs ran out. Indeed, before the bearer reached the door the click was heard, followed by "God Save the Queen," the muffled tones, struggling under the tablecloth, dying away in the distance.

I remember a somewhat similar accident ruffling the temper of the late Duke of Teck. He was present at one of the City Companies' dinners, I think it was ^{An Inter-} the Needlemakers', and it fell to his lot to ^{rupted Speech.} propose the health of the Queen. Rising in fine form, the Duke, uplifting his glass, said: "Gentlemen, I give you a toast to the health of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen."

He paused a moment with glass uplifted, looking with gracious smile round the crowded tables. The watchful bandmaster in the gallery, concluding that was all, gave the signal, and the band vigorously played "God Save the Queen."

I never saw the Duke so angry. Turning towards the gallery he shouted "No! no!" shaking his fist at the back of the bandmaster. That was the worst of it. The conductor's back being turned and the bandsmen diligently keeping their eye on his *bâton*, some moments elapsed before they realised the situation and abruptly stopped the tune.

Then the Duke continued what proved to be a speech of exceptional elaboration, evolved in the study at White Lodge. But it never quite recovered from the shock that almost killed it at its birth.

It is among things not generally known that the Nasmyth hammer of the House of Commons, which can split a massive steel bar or crack a walnut, minutely orders the scale of payment for soldiers when billeted upon licensed victuallers in pursuance of the Army Act. The prices are scheduled in the Army Bill, which is renewed every year. For lodging and attendance in houses where a hot meal is furnished the soldier pays a maximum sum of 4d. a night. For the hot meal (the component parts whereof are sternly specified in Part I. of the second schedule of the Army Act) 1s. 3½d. is allowed. That seems pretty liberal, but the average is struck with breakfast, for which only 1½d. is paid. Where no hot meal is furnished, 4d. a day may be charged. This payment includes candles, vinegar, salt, use of fire, and the necessary utensils for dressing and eating the soldier's meat.

On the higher scale the allowance per day for a soldier foots up to 1s. 9d. per head. Exactly the same sum per diem is allowed for the soldier's horse. For that sum he (the horse) is to have 10lb. of oats, 12lb. of hay, and 8lb. of straw, and his master must see that he gets it. For an officer the maximum charge for lodging and attendance is 2s. a night.

Officers are left to make their own arrangements with respect to their food.

There are other curious things about the Army Act. According to the Constitution it is against the law to raise

A Crisis
averted. or keep a standing army within the United Kingdom in time of peace unless it be with the consent of Parliament. So jealous is the Legislature on the subject that it will give such consent for no longer a period than twelve months. The Act passed last Session remains in force in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man up to the 30th day of April. If before that date the Act be not renewed, chaos would come. The Army being an illegal institution, the chains of discipline would be snapped. Tommy Atkins, like his colonel, would revert to the state of a simple citizen, might walk out of barracks and go home to tea, none daring to make him afraid.

In the general muddle of business in the House of Commons last Session the renewal of the Army Act was run perilously close to the ultimate possible date, and the Twelve O'clock Rule had to be suspended in order to make sure of carrying it through at a particular sitting.

TOMMY ATKINS REVERTING
TO CIVILIAN LIFE.

There is nothing so precious as the kindness of an old friend. When Mr. John Morley was approaching his great task, the record of the life of Mr. Gladstone, one of his old Cabinet colleagues¹ cheered him with assurance of success. But he felt constrained to make conditions.

‘Don’t touch the ecclesiastical side of Gladstone, because

¹ Sir William Harcourt.

How to write a
Biography.

you have no sympathy with it. Don't deal with his finance, because you know nothing about it. Avoid all reference to his Home Rule campaign, because you know too much. These conditions observed, you'll make an interesting, valuable contribution to biography."

With reference to the Great Seal, a correspondent sends me an interesting and authoritative note. "The Seal in use at the time you wrote," he tells me, "was not the
The Great Seal. one made for the late Queen on her accession. A new pair of dies were made somewhere about 1860, and I believe (but am not sure) another new pair about the time

THE REAL GREAT SEAL.

of the assumption of the title Empress of India, about 1876. Further, there is no collection of Great Seals in the Tower or elsewhere. There is, I believe, a complete collection of impressions of the Seals of all the English monarchs in the British Museum; but the original Seals (the dies) were in former times damasked by being broken to pieces with a smith's hammer in the presence of the King, the fragments becoming the property of the Keeper for the time being. In more recent times the damasking has been done by a gentle tap with a hammer administered by the Sovereign, the Seal itself becoming the perquisite of the Keeper, who is the Lord Chancellor. Damasked Great Seals have generally been set in salvers, one pair of dies serving for two salvers. References to such salvers will be found in the wills of several deceased Chancellors.

"Another perquisite of the Keeper of the Great Seal is the crimson silk purse in which the Seal is kept and borne before the Chancellor. A new one is provided yearly, and the disused ones are retained by the fortunate Keeper. The frugal wife of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, in the eighteenth century, collected enough purses during her husband's long tenure of the Seals to furnish a complete set of hangings for her State bed.

"The Great Seal cast by James II. into the Thames was not permanently lost. It was, after several months, fished by chance out of the river in a fisherman's net, none the worse for its bath, and was damasked in the ordinary course."

One of the oldest (of course, I mean the most deeply rooted in popular affection) of the actresses of to-day¹ tells me she has never got over the tendency to stage fright. First nights are to her as severe ordeals Stage Fright. as they were before a long succession marked the stages of unvarying triumph.

It is a fact well known to those of her immediate *entourage* that Queen Victoria, after sixty years of public life, never got over a feeling of nervousness whenever she took part in a public ceremonial. I well remember an occasion when Her Majesty capitulated to this strange influence. It was on the occasion of the opening of the Royal Courts of Justice on the 4th of December 1882. The stately hall was packed with the most distinguished representatives of politics, literature, art, science, and society. The well-ordered ceremonial culminated in the moment when the Queen was to declare the building open.

As it approached, those seated close by the dais observed Her Majesty in a state of profound unrest. She beckoned to the Home Secretary, and as he bent over her chair addressed him with considerable animation. The impression of those looking on was that something had gone wrong and that Sir William Harcourt was getting a wiggling. Sir

¹ Miss Ellen Terry.

William tells me that what happened was that the Queen, suddenly attacked by access of stage fright, sent for him, told him she was not able to utter the brief sentence assigned to her part, and commissioned him to do it in her name.

Looking back over the files of the *Times* I find the incident thus reported in the issue of the 5th December 1882: "After a moment's consultation with the Queen, Sir William Harcourt said he had Her Majesty's commands to declare the building open."

Last Session, dull in most aspects, was little relieved by those flashes of undesigned humour for which a bored House

Bulls. is rapturously grateful. I recall one or two.

In Committee on the Army Estimates Mr. O'Mara threw the great weight of his opinion against the War Office scheme for the defence of London by the erection of fortifications.

"Your Navy is your only defence," he said. "If the Navy temporarily left the seas——"

What would happen in the event of the British Navy being drawn up and absorbed in the clouds, or taking to land pursuits, will never be known, the burst of laughter that broke in on the suggestion preventing the prophet from concluding his forecast.

It was another Irish member who, observing the Chief Secretary rising to reply to a question on the paper, hurriedly interposed with the remark, "I hope the right hon. gentleman will not reply till I have put another question arising out of his answer."

A prolific breeder of bulls is Mr. W. Redmond. Giving an account of his conversation with Mr. Kruger shortly after

Strained Affection. he had, with patriotic purpose, paid him a visit in his Continental home, he told how the ex-President, learning that his visitor represented County Clare, surmised that his constituents were not in favour of the war against the Boers.

"I said to him," Mr. Redmond reported, "'Why, Mr.

President, if you were to come to County Clare the people would hug you to death.' ”

What reply Oom Paul made to this enticing description of the fate that awaited him in County Clare was not included in Mr. Redmond's narrative. We know, however, the wary ex-President did not go.

Of another kind of unconscious

Disappointing humour
an Audience. was a

parenthetical sentence in one of Mr. Lough's not infrequent contributions to debate on current topics. The pink of courtesy, the member for Islington

WILLIE REDMOND HUGS MR. KRUGER.

is ornately deferential to his audience, even when it is crying "Vide, 'vide, 'vide!" Having on this particular occasion set forth his argument at some length he remarked: "If I may, with the permission of the Committee for one moment, go outside——"

A hearty cheer welcomed the suggestion. Members knew that if Mr. Lough left the House, even for a moment, the Chairman would call on another member. The pleasing prospect was but short lived. Mr. Lough did not mean to be taken literally. He merely proposed to enlarge his pastures, temporarily straying beyond the boundary of the subject before the Committee.

It is so long since Lord Cork came into his earldom

that people have forgotten he once sat in the House of Commons. Of that episode his lordship preserves vivid

memory. **The Talking Dinner-hour.** about the proposed alteration of the sitting of the House so as to have a fixed dinner-hour, Lord Cork tells me that fifty years ago, when he was a member, there was no such thing as dining on the premises. This for the sufficient reason that there was no accommodation. Between half-past seven and eight members went off

MR. THOMAS LOUGH,

to dine at home, at their club, or at a friend's house. Meanwhile the interval was the recognised opportunity for young members to flesh their maiden swords. The period was not inspiring, and was seldom attended by a quorum.

At the present time what is known as the dinner-hour fully shares the characteristic of dulness and the benches are equally desolate. To attempt a count-out proves irresistible to mischievous members. Mr. Joseph Gillis Biggar, preserving native habits of dining at one o'clock in the afternoon and taking a high tea about seven, was accustomed, at the conclusion of the latter meal, to hover about the dining-rooms waiting till the tables were crowded and, for choice, the fish about to be served. The soup might keep hot. The fish handed round in portions would seriously suffer by a quarter of an hour's delay. The moment thus chosen, Mr. Biggar returned to the House and moved a count. Of course a

quorum was forthcoming, but the Saxon had been hurried at his meal and his fish was spoiled.

In the days when Lord Cork sat in the Commons a count moved in the dinner-hour would inevitably succeed, since there was no dining-room and no reserve of members. Accordingly it became a point of honour that no count should be moved between eight and ten o'clock. At ten o'clock, when members streamed in from dinner, the real business of the sitting began, and was carried on far into the night.

CHAPTER XLII

MAY

ONE of my earliest recollections of the House of Commons, a fascinating study, was Mr. Newdegate,¹ member for North

An Old Tory.

Warwickshire, a constituency he represented for nearly forty years. He was one of the first old stagers to claim a corner seat. It was the fourth below the gangway. Thence, through the changing years, his solemn figure loomed on the right of the Speaker if the Conservatives were in ; on the left if, for its sins, the country was bestridden by Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues.

Mr. Newdegate would have been notable in any company. Without affectation of peculiar dress, his presence suggested reminiscence of the English gentleman of the pre-Victorian epoch. His constant companion was a voluminous red silk bandana—"his nearest approach to contact with the Scarlet Woman," as was said of him a quarter of a century ago. When speaking, he held the handkerchief in his hand and waved it in the face of the foe. Having concluded his speech, he rolled the bandana up ball-shape, and held as much of it as his hand would cover rested on his knee.

When in the Parliament of 1880 the Conservatives crossed over to the Opposition side, the Irish members retained their seats below the gangway, and Mr. Newdegate, changing places, found himself in their midst.

It was an odd fate, like others, borne with monumental

¹ Died 1887.

gravity. It was his duty, once a year, to move the second reading of a Bill authorising State inspection of conventual institutions. This drove the Irish Catholics into paroxysms of indignation, and drew from Major O'Gorman the memorable speech that established his reputation. The Bill thrown out, their old feeling of kindly esteem for this typical Protestant Tory revived. Whenever he rose, save when he had his Conventual Bill in hand, the Irish members hailed him with a boisterous cheer.

There was a story told in "Gosset's Room" how Mr. Newdegate for a full hour, all unconsciously, filled the place of the Irish Leader. When one night he rose from the corner

MAJOR O'GORMAN, /

seat there was the customary cheer from the Irish benches below him.

"Who's that?" asked a stranger in the gallery.

His neighbour, equally ignorant, but capable of putting two and two together, noting the cheer, felt it would be evoked by only one man in that part of the House. "It's Parnell," he answered.

The whisper went round the crowded gallery, whose occupants looked down with fresh interest at the solemn figure uttering lamentation and woe from the corner seat.

Mr. Newdegate's life was made gloomy by the Pope. He saw His Holiness's hand stretched forth in all directions, working evil small and great. By a strange coincidence, a

contemporary, Mr. Whalley, was equally apprehensive of the Jesuits. The House listening to the speech
 Mr. Whalley. of either member wickedly waited for the inevitable alternative reference, and was rarely disappointed.

By a not unfamiliar impulse of human nature in certain circumstances, these estimable gentlemen each thought the other was slightly cracked, and spoke pitifully of his prevailing illusion. One night, Mr. Whalley having alluded slightly to the member for North Warwickshire's craze, Mr. Newdegate brought the House down by confiding to it his lugubrious conviction that Mr. Whalley was a Jesuit in disguise.

What I did not know at the time about Mr. Newdegate is that he was among the very few mem- A Cromwellian
 bers of the House of Com- Newdegate.

mons whose family connection with the place went back in direct line to the days of Cromwell. His ancestor was Mr. Serjeant Newdigate, member for

MR. WHALLEY AS IMAGINED
 BY MR. NEWDEGATE.

Tamworth in 1660. Cromwell made him a judge. Not being sufficiently obsequious to please the Lord Protector, he was removed from the Bench and returned to his former practice at the Bar. At the Restoration the ex-judge was made a baronet, and died full of honours in the seventy-seventh year of his age.

He was succeeded by his son Richard, who came into possession of the family estates at Arbury in Warwickshire, and Harefield in Middlesex. These descended to our old friend, who, like his far-off kinsman, Sir Richard, used to come up to Westminster from Arbury to attend the sitting of the House of Commons.

There has lately been discovered at Arbury a collection of MS. News-Letters written to Sir Richard Newdigate (he spelt his name with an s), dated from 1675 to 1712. Also

the wreck of a private Diary kept by Sir Richard during the busier years of his life, including his membership of the House of Commons. Doubtless the original work contained descriptions of events in Parliament and in the political world outside it that would be invaluable to-day. When Charles II. was on the throne it was not judicious to keep on the premises written documents relating to public affairs. At some crisis Sir Richard tore out whole sheets of his Diary and mutilated others, with the result that they contain little of political interest.

Peeps at the
Past.

But the News-Letters, the London Correspondence of Stuart days, remain intact and throw many side-lights on life in Merrie England in the days of Charles II. Here is a glimpse of Nell Gwynne photographed in the street: "Madame Gwynne is said to wager very highly at races and cockpits, and one morning in a frolic she clothed herself in man's apparel with a horseman's coat, etc., and meeting the King saluted him, at which His Majesty and Court were very well pleased."

Later, we come on the following item: "Madame Gwynne's mother was found drowned in a ditch near the Noah houses by Chelsea, and last night was privately buried in St. Margaret's." If, as appears probable, this is St. Margaret's, Westminster, members of the House of Commons will be interested to find fresh connection between their parish church and the storied past.

Political conviction took strange turns with gentlemen about the Merry Monarch's Court. "On Sunday night," it is written in one of the News-Letters, upon which Sir Richard Newdigate lavished a subscription of twenty-five shillings a quarter, "the Lord Kingston and Lord Hunsdon went from Will's Coffee House to Peter's in Covent Garden to affront the Whigs, where they looked about the room and cried, 'D—— the Whigs for rogues,' etc. But nobody speaking to them they took hold of one party, a tailor, as he was going, and asked him whether he was a Whig or a Tory, and he crying 'A Whig' they burnt his periwig, and Billingsley kicked him down stairs, of which he threatens to complain to the council."

There is a gruesome story showing how the hangman, approaching the gallows to do his duty, came near by being hung. Two villains convicted of murder at Hertford Assizes were sentenced to be hung in chains at Barnet. "While the executioner was busy in fastening the rope on the gibbet, Bungay, one of the malefactors, unloosing his hands with his teeth, took off the rope from his own neck and dexterously put it over the executioner's head, got astride on the gibbet, thrust away the ladder, and had certainly hanged him had not the rope been somewhat entangled in one part of his hat, which occasioned him to drop through ; and it was well-nigh an hour (he defending himself from their assaults) before he could be got down and executed."

Since Saul was observed "also among the prophets" there has been no such strange sight as the member for **Mr. Caldwell** Mid-Lanarkshire seated on the Treasury Bench **enjoys himself.** bossing the colleagues of Lord Salisbury. As soon as Private Bill legislation gets into swing it may be seen every day. Mr. Caldwell's proper place is immediately behind the Front Opposition Bench, in close proximity to the Chair, so that he may keep his eye on the Speaker ; immediately opposite the Treasury Bench, so that he may correct Mr. Balfour on points of order ; immediately behind Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, who, amid much tribulation, is conscious of a feeling of strength and security born of the knowledge that Mr. Caldwell's knees are in close contiguity to his back.

The member for Mid-Lanark takes his seat on the Treasury Bench in virtue of his office as Chairman of the Private Bill Committee. The office, though obscure by comparison with that of the Colonial Secretary, is indispensable to the progress of legislation. Some one must formally move the early stages of private Bills and watch over the full course of unopposed ones. The promoters, not being members of the House, have no *locus standi*. It would be a waste of time and trouble to tack on members of the House to each Bill. Accordingly the Chairman of

the Private Bill Committee undertakes the duty, and from time immemorial it has been the usage that he shall conduct the operation from the Treasury Bench.

To see Mr. Caldwell at work is refreshing even in the summer solstice. He sits on the extreme edge of the bench, with the breadth of his frock-coat carefully wrapped about his legs, to prevent possible contamination from

MR. CALDWELL AT WORK.

contact with a Unionist Secretary of State for India and his colleague, the President of the Local Government Board, who frequent this section of the Treasury Bench. In the course of the performance Mr. Caldwell makes many speeches. His poignant regret is that they are necessarily brief. The Clerk at the table, reading down the list of private Bills, cites them severally, also the proposal that they be read a first time or a second time. Mr. Caldwell raises his hat in token that he makes the motion, his uttered speech being limited to naming a day for the next stage. The process may seem monotonous, especially when, as sometimes happens, it runs through a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. But the bustling importance Mr. Caldwell

throws into the business, the stern glance he keeps on the Clerk, the effective manner in which he resents furtive attempts by Lord George Hamilton and Mr. Walter Long to edge him off the seat, invest the episode with peculiar and irresistible charm.

The selection of a Chairman of Ways and Means widely differs from the ceremony that marks the election of a Speaker. The latter is a full-dress affair, the occasion of considerable speech-making.

The Chairman of Committee.

It is carried out in accordance with precedent, going back to the earliest days of Parliamentary history. It is quite possible for the selection of the Speaker's Deputy to be accomplished without the observant stranger in the gallery knowing that anything unusual has happened. No notice is necessary, nor is there any preparation for ceremonial. The first time a new Parliament gets into Committee of Supply the Leader of the House, half-rising from the Treasury Bench, casually observes, "I move that Mr. Lowther"—Mr. Courtney, or whomsoever may be the person selected—"take the chair." The motion is not seconded, nor is the question put. The Speaker promptly retires, and the new Chairman of Ways and Means, who by unvarying good-fortune is at this moment found arrayed in evening dress, seated at the end of the Treasury Bench, steps into the chair at the table vacated by the Clerk of the House.

MR. JEFFREYS, THE NEW
DEPUTY SPEAKER.

It is not good form to make any demonstration. The new Chairman, seizing hold of the Estimates, puts the first vote as if he had been engaged on similar business all his life, and discussion goes forward in Committee. Like the Speaker, the Chairman is appointed for the duration of the

Parliament. His salary is £2500, just half that of the Speaker. Unlike the Speaker, residence, stately or otherwise, is not attached to the office. On the other hand, the position of Chairman of Ways and Means is free from encumbrance of heavy expense that attaches to the dignity of the Speaker.

Something akin to the plain business-like procedure in the election of Chairman of Ways and Means is found in

the installation of
~~Secretaries~~ Secretaries to the
~~to the~~ Treasury. These

are two in number — the Financial Secretary, who has charge of the business of the House of Commons and is usually an understudy to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Patronage Secretary, a style now a misnomer. Sir William Walrond, the present incumbent of the office, sleeps o' nights with the glad assurance that he has no patronage at his disposal to be squabbled for. Although officially known as the Patronage Secretary, his more familiar style is that of Chief Whip.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, FINANCIAL
 SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY.

Mr. Gladstone, by the way, in the full flush of reforming impulse, at one time proposed to add a third Secretary to the Treasury staff. This was in 1866, and was ^{Inevitable} part of a large scheme of Treasury reform that ^{Queen Anne.} has remained in abeyance. Mr. Gladstone's impulse was checked by discovery that such an office could not be made practically useful without passing a special Act.

The particular lion in the path was the VI. of Queen Anne, which forbade any Ministerial office subsequently created to be held with a seat in Parliament. As it was an

essential part of Mr. Gladstone's plan that the proposed new Secretary should have a seat in the House of Commons, and as with the Parliamentary Reform Bill in hand he could not afford to potter round minor matters, the scheme was dropped.

When a new Ministry is completed the Treasury meet in the Board-room and the Permanent Secretary reads the Patent. This constitutes the Board, **Averting a Deadlock.** and the First Lord of the Treasury thereupon directs that the new Secretaries shall be called in. By similar happy accident to that which finds the Chairman-designate of Ways and Means in evening dress as early as three o'clock in the afternoon on the day he is to be called to the chair, the new Secretaries to the Treasury are always within hail, ready to answer the signal of the First Lord. On entering the Board-room, the First Lord directs them to take their seats at the table, and without more ado business proceeds.

This process of installation is a small matter in itself. But it has substantial advantages for the Secretaries to the Treasury, and is attended by much convenience in the House of Commons. As soon as a new Government is formed, members of it accepting office directly under the Crown must needs, in accordance with imperative Queen Anne, seek re-election. The consequence is that, for a week or ten days after a new Parliament meets, the House of Commons is as a sheep without a shepherd, the principal Ministers being forbidden entrance to the House to which they have just been elected by their constituents till they have obtained renewal of their confidence.

By rare exception, in the Parliament meeting for the first time in November 1900, the Ministry dominant in the old Parliament having been reinstated in the new, the embarrassment did not present itself. In 1880 the Conservative Government were *chassés*, and Mr. Gladstone returned in their place. The existence of this statute of Queen Anne accidentally established a malign influence on the fortunes of the Gladstone Ministry, from which, in spite

of its overwhelming majority, it never recovered. Between the date of the meeting of the new Parliament and the return of the Premier after re-election the Bradlaugh difficulty was born, and, carefully tended by the incipient Fourth Party, lustily grew. Had Mr. Gladstone been in his place when the cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, showed itself on the horizon, he would have taken steps, easy and obvious, to prevent its spreading. In his absence, and that of all Ministers of Cabinet rank, the matter was so bungled that when they appeared on the scene the affair had grown out of hand.

At such epochs the principal representative of the Government is the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. He, in company with his colleague, the Patronage Secretary, does not receive his appointment direct from the Sovereign. As we have seen, he is called in by the First Lord of the Treasury, and thereby escapes the inconvenience, loss of time, and possible peril of presenting himself for re-election.

Occasionally, under the pressure of work and momentary exasperation, Mr. Balfour "lets fly" in the House of

Mr. Balfour's Commons. As Sir Henry Antipathies. Howorth, Mr. Bartley, and Mr. Burdett-Coutts have reason to know, his attack is not necessarily, or by preference, directed towards the Opposition benches. But in that part of the House his antipathies live—or rather exist—happily unconscious of the nature of his regard. Mercifully the caprice of the constituencies has removed two from the direct line of his glance as he sits on the Treasury Bench. One was Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, "IS THAT SHAW-LEFEVRE?" an able, conscientious, hard-working man, the mere sight of whom, by some subtle irresistible influence, instantly changed the aspect of Mr. Balfour's usually smiling countenance.

The other was a Scotch member, an accomplished,

amiable gentleman, who exercised the same mysterious influence. It was added aggravation that, seated behind the Front Opposition Bench, he night after night came in direct line of the vision of the right hon. gentleman lounging on the Treasury Bench. It is an undeniable fact that there was something in the contour of the hon. member's face and head that suggested the anatomy of a horse. One of his colleagues remarking this in the confidence of the Treasury Bench, Mr. Balfour sharply replied :—

“Yes, he looks like a horse, but he's only an ass.”

Never since language was invented was it turned to anything so terrible in its scorn as this diminuendum of dislike.

CHAPTER XLIII

JUNE

AMID a succession of historic scenes witnessed in the House of Commons during the last thirty years, three are deeply

**Making
History.** scored in memory. One befell on the threshold of the Session of 1878. By grim coincidence Parliament then, as this year, guided by a Conservative Government, was summoned to meet three weeks in advance of the accustomed time. Coincidence is completed by the facts that it met on precisely the same day, the 16th of January, urged by the same impetus, the necessity of obtaining funds for warlike purposes. There was profound unrest in the East, an influence reacting on Downing Street. Before the House had been in Session ten days news came that the Russians were marching on Gallipoli. Attention was strained for the first sound of their thundering at the gates of Constantinople.

THE EARL OF DERBY.

Lord Beaconsfield's Ministry declaring for war, Lord Carnarvon retired. Lord Derby proffered his resignation and withdrew it. Challenged in the House of Lords for an

explanation of this conduct, he explained that he resigned when the fleet was ordered to the Dardanelles, cancelling the action when, on a fresh turn of affairs, order was dispatched stopping the eager fleet just as it approached the mouth of the famous waterway.

I remember a piece of paper passed along the crowded benches of the House of Commons, in Sir Wilfrid Lawson's schoolboy handwriting, in which the situation was epigrammatically summed up:—

When the Government ordered the fleet to the Straits,
They surely encountered the hardest of fates ;
For the order, scarce given, at once was recalled,
And the Russians were not in the slightest appalled.
And every one says, who has heard the debates,
"It's the Cabinet now, not the fleet, that's in straits !"

Crisis came before the House of Commons in the form of a demand for a Vote of Credit. It was only for six millions, a trifle compared with what we have

A Scare.

grown accustomed to during the last two years. On the 7th of February the House was crowded in anticipation of a hostile amendment being moved from the Front Opposition Bench by Mr. Forster. Rumour of advance of the Russians on Constantinople clouded the City through the day. When the House met it buzzed about the crowded Lobby. Lord Hartington, then Leader of the Opposition, asked Sir Stafford Northcote, Leader of the House, whether there was any truth in the report. Sir Stafford read a telegram from Mr. Layard, Her Majesty's Minister at Constantinople, dated two days earlier, describing how, in spite of the armistice, the Russians were pushing on, and had compelled the Turks to abandon important positions on the line of the defence of their capital.

Mr. Forster, in view of the gravely-altered aspect of affairs, proposed to withdraw his amendment. Mr. Bright, following some minor speakers, threw doubt on the foundation for alarm.

"Our Ambassador at the Porte," he said, in tone of withering sarcasm, "has been alarmed several times."

Even as he spoke a letter was passed along the Treasury Bench to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He showed it to a colleague seated near him, whose countenance betrayed profound perturbation. John Bright having made an end of speaking, Stafford Northcote rose, observing that he had an important communication to make. Solemn silence fell on the crowded benches, members leaning forward to catch momentous words that might mean war. The missive Sir Stafford held in his hand proved to be a communication from Lord Derby conveying a telegram direct from Prince Gortchakoff declaring that there was not a word of truth in the circumstantial report that had stirred London to its depths and swept through the House of Commons with a storm of excitement.

The dramatic quality of the scene was intensified by the fact that the whole thing—the alarm from Constantinople, the withdrawal of the amendment, and the reassuring despatch from St. Petersburg, supplying a touch of comedy to the threatened tragedy—was completed within an hour.

The second scene I have in mind, though on a lower level of European interest, was similar in its

The Kilmainham Treaty.

swift movement and the appearance on the scene of a written communication that changed everything. By a strange coincidence Mr. Forster was again a leading actor in its development.

THE LATE RIGHT HON.
W. E. FORSTER.

It happened in May 1882, a week after the assassination in Phoenix Park. Mr. Forster having resigned the Chief Secretaryship and quitted the Treasury Bench was seated on the corner seat of the bench immediately behind. Question arising of the circumstances under which Mr. Parnell had been recently released from Kilmainham, that gentleman read

what purported to be the letter written by him to Captain O'Shea, which presently came to be known as the Kilmainham Treaty.

It declared in colourless language that in the event of the Government refraining from introducing a Crimes Act, and forthwith dealing with the question of arrears of rent, Mr. Parnell and his colleagues "would feel themselves in a position to assist in restraining agrarian outrages."

There the matter seemed to end, and the House was proceeding to other business when Mr. Forster rose and in significant manner asked whether Mr. Parnell had read the whole of his letter. The Opposition, which in those days prominently included the Fourth Party, pricked up their ears. Mr. Parnell replied that he had read the whole of the copy supplied to him by Mr. O'Shea. The original, he added, contained another paragraph, and so far as he was concerned there would be no objection to having it read. Amid boisterous cheers from the Conservatives, Mr. Forster, taking a manuscript from his pocket, handed it to Mr. O'Shea and invited him to read the last paragraph. Mr. O'Shea, who happened to be conveniently seated on the other side of the gangway, glanced over the document, and without making any remark returned it to Mr. Forster. The ex-Chief Secretary waved it back, saying, "It's not my letter."

After more parleying across the gangway Mr. O'Shea, amid loud laughter and ironical cheers from the Opposition, read the expurgated paragraph, in which Mr. Parnell further undertook, on behalf of himself and friends, to "co-operate cordially with the Liberal party in forwarding Liberal principles."

The third scene, unrelieved in painfulness, happened in the present Session. In the second week of March suddenly,

**"A
regrettable
incident."** a bolt out of the blue, fell news of the defeat and discomfiture of Lord Methuen's column, the wounding of the General, his capture, and the seizure of guns and baggage. No one was at the time especially thinking of the war. The Paper was curiously free from questions bearing upon it. The preliminary busi-

ness was over, the Speaker had risen to call on the Clerk to read the Orders of the Day, when Mr. Brodrick approached the table. There was something in his countenance and bearing that implied portentous news. Not a whisper of any had circulated in House or Lobby. If there had been an engagement, whether it had gone well or ill with the British, rumour of it would certainly have spread in advance of Ministerial statement.

This consideration, flashing through the mind, suggested the wild hope that the Secretary of State for War, repository of the State secret of negotiations with the Boer

MR. BRODRICK READING LORD
KITCHENER'S DESPATCH.

Generals, was the harbinger of peace. Profound silence reigned over the crowded benches. The opening sentence of Lord Kitchener's despatch read by Mr. Brodrick crushed hope, leaving in its place a feeling approaching despair. "I greatly regret to have to send you bad news about Methuen."

The promise was amply fulfilled. Lord Methuen, grievously wounded, was a prisoner in the hands of the Boers. To their camp he was

THE JOY OF SWIFT MACNEILL.

escorted with a long train of captured guns and baggage.

Worse still was the mental picture swiftly drawn of 550 mounted troops wearing British uniform, chased by the Boers for a run of full four miles. When Mr. Brodrick in his reading came upon the first item in the bad news a chuckle of delight rippled over the benches where the Irish members sat, greedily attentive. As the story went on, disclosing the gallant Methuen shot in the thigh, a helpless prisoner in the hands of the man he had been chivying for two years, the chuckle became a burst of jubilant laughter, breaking into boisterous cheers. That child of Nature, Mr. Swift MacNeill, so far forgot himself as to clap his hands for joy after the manner of the little hills known to the Psalmist.

Next to the hopeless bad taste of the demonstration was its cheap security. Had it happened in any other public resort in Great Britain, indignation would have taken a practical form that would have landed the Irish members outside. Twelve baskets would probably not have sufficed to hold the remaining fragments of the party. The House of Commons is sanctuary for even the most cowardly assailant. There were angry cries of "Shame! Shame!" from the Ministerial benches. Beyond that involuntary outburst of indignation, English and Scotch gentlemen sat proudly silent whilst Ireland, the most generous-hearted chivalrous-mannered of the three kingdoms, was thus misrepresented on the most public platform in the world.

Sir Edward Montagu, Knight of the Shire for Northampton in the first Parliament of James I., would stare aghast at his lineal descendant, the present member for the New Forest Division of Hampshire, arriving at the scene of his legislative labours. Sir Edward, when he repaired to Westminster in response to the King's summons, drove in the family coach with due precaution against intrusion by the way. The Hon. John Walter Edward Douglas Scott-Montagu arrives in Palace Yard driving his own motor-car. The police once forbade the entrance to Palace Yard of his strange vehicle.

The House of
Montagu : old
style and new.

But the kinsman and modern representative of the Bold Buccleuch was not to be baffled by "a bobby." There was talk of breach of privilege, before which the police discreetly retired, and the motor-car from the New Forest to-day dashes into Palace Yard as free to come and go as was Sir Edward Montagu's palfrey three hundred years ago.

When Sir Edward took his seat in the House of Commons he resolved to keep a diary. Unhappily, as too often attends similar resolve, it was not long The King opens Parliament. persevered in. Else, in priceless prelude of other works on the same lines, we might at this day have had a "Diary of the Jacobean Parliament." As far as it goes the manuscript is full of interest. With much other of historical value, it is religiously preserved at Beaulieu, where John Scott-Montagu's father, Lord Montagu, does the State quiet service by patiently, lovingly preserving the ruins of the beautiful Abbey adjoining the family residence.

Under date 19th March 1603, Sir Edward describes the opening of the first Parliament of King James. "The first day, being Monday, 19th March, after the King was gone to church, the Lord High Steward, who was the Earl of Nottingham, came into the usual place in Westminster, and after he had called all the knights, citizens, and burgesses, and sworn some to the supremacy, the rest went into the Courts next the Parliament House, and there were sworn by certain of the House appointed commissioners by the Steward, and there most of them remained expecting to be sent for into the Higher House."

It will be perceived that here is marked difference in the swearing-in of a new Parliament as practised in the twentieth century. In James's time a peer, the nominee of the King, busied himself about administering the oath to the Commons. Now the business is transacted within the privacy of the chamber on whose floor no peer dare set foot.

There seems to have been some misunderstanding about summoning the waiting Commons to hear the King's Speech. Either their existence was forgotten or it was wilfully ignored. "The King's Majesty, after he was set and all the

Lords placed," the Diary continues—"the King demanded once or twice whether the Lower House was come. Answer being made that they were" (though indeed the House was not there, Sir Edward severely remarks), "His Majesty, putting off his cap and crown, and putting it on again, made a most excellent speech."

It was rather long, continuing almost an hour. After this the Lord Chancellor made a speech and "willed the Lower House to choose a Speaker, and to present him to His Majesty on Thursday next." This done, the diarist and one or two other Commoners, who had shrewdly made their way to the Upper House, returned to the other, which they found crowded with deluded members, waiting for a call that never came. Compared with this slight, what took place on Jubilee Day, when the Commons, summoned to Buckingham Palace to salute Queen Victoria, were not permitted to approach the Royal presence, is a mere nothing.

From other letters in this connection written by newsmen and private correspondents we get peeps at "Withdraw! Parliament in that far-off time. In 1641-42 Withdraw!" London was ablaze with excitement about sending the Bishops to the Tower and the attempt by the King to seize members of the House of Commons. Friction between the two Houses was great. A news-letter dated 29th December 1641 says: "Late at night the Lord Digby stood up in the Lords House and made a most invective speech against the Commons House for breaking laws and privileges entrenching upon the King, and upon them (the Lords). He bespattered the House of Commons as much as one would do his cloak in riding from Ware to London."

Inside and outside disorder reigned. In the House of Lords Lord Warwick spoke in debate on the question of toleration for Popery. "The Bishop of York, not liking it, said to my Lord of Warwick, 'Hold your tongue,' at which they cried, 'Withdraw! Withdraw!' But his Grace was obstinate and would not. Whereupon they compelled him to withdraw, and then committed him to the Black Rod."

A mob of citizens mustering in Westminster Hall, "there came some sixteen or seventeen gentlemenlike, and in a kind of foolish way said they would drive away all the citizens out of Westminster Hall, and every man drew his sword and flourished up and down the hall as if it were to invite to combat, but struck no man. They had not flourished twice the hall but about a hundred citizens, some six with swords, and as many with cudgels, and the rest with stones, came up, and first with a volley of stones let fly at them, then came up close to them, half of the gentlemen running away ; the rest, some eight of either side, maintained the fight until the gentlemen were all run away or beat down."

The Bishops had a bad time at the hands of the mob. "There were certain Bishops coming to the House, and the apprentices cried, 'A Bishop! A Bishop!' and so with cries kept them from landing, they rowing up and down about an hour and at last went back."

The attempted arrest by King Charles of the five members of the House of Commons has been related by a stately procession of historians. Here is an The five Members. unadorned account written 260 years ago to Lord Montagu by an eye-witness: "The next day, January 4th, 1642, the Commons came to the House and the five men with them, and when it was about twelve o'clock they had notice that the King would come with some hundreds to take those men by force. They, understanding, went away, and presently the King came with some 400, about a hundred of his own servants, and all the rest captains and other broken and desperate fortune men, only young Mr. Sawyer excepted. These accompanied His Majesty, who, for haste, went in a hackney coach. But when he came into the Commons House he looked about and found none of them.

"'What,' said he, 'are all the birds flown? Well, I will find them,' and so departed."

For simplicity of phrase, for brevity, and for graphic power this passage is worthy of comparison with some

of the masterpieces of prose narrative that ennoble the Old Testament. The chronicler makes no attempt to describe the scene. But as we read we behold it. The Commons assembled for their ordinary work; the Speaker in the Chair; the mace on the table; and, "when it was about twelve o'clock," news that the King was coming; the hurried consultation; the swift withdrawal of the five members; the rabble

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JUST POPPING IN—"I HOPE I
DON'T INTRUDE."

letter gives an equally graphic

account of the feeling of the people

at this outrage upon

Parliament: "On the ^{in the City.}

day following the King, accom-

panied by divers of his Lords,

repaired to Guildhall, where the

Common Council were sitting, and

explained that he went in the way

of arms to the Commons House the

day before for fear of the multitude."

DISAPPROVAL.

That the fear was not unfounded subsequent incidents testified. His Majesty graciously accepted an invitation to

dine with the sheriff. When he went back the Lord Mayor came to wait upon His Majesty, "and after the King was gone the citizens' wives fell upon the Lord Mayor and pulled his chain from his neck, and called him traitor to the City and to the liberties of it, and had like to have torn both him and the Recorder in pieces."

As for the King, wending his way home westward, "he had the worst day in London that ever he had, the people crying 'Privilege of Parliament,' and prayed God to turn the heart of the King, shutting up all their shops, and standing at their doors with swords and halberds."

Here out of this musty letter 260 years old is subject for a fine historical picture. One can see the perturbed, but still unyielding, Charles driving through Cheapside with the stout citizens of London praying God to turn his heart, but "standing at their doors with swords and halberds."

CHAPTER XLIV

JULY

THE Sovereign's appearance on the scene at the close of a Session would be interesting, amongst other things, as reviving an ancient custom dimly, and not quite accurately, recalled by the present occupant of the Chair in the House of Commons. Speaking at the Mansion House early in the Session, Mr. Gully stated his belief that "the last Speaker who had the opportunity of airing his eloquence at the prorogation of Parliament was Mr. Manners Sutton, who ceased to be Speaker in 1835." As Mr. Sidney Lee, whose knowledge, like the *National Biography* he edited, is encyclopædic, pointed out, this custom survived to a much later date. So recently as the Session of 1854, when for the last time Queen Victoria went down to prorogue Parliament, the Speaker harangued Her Majesty at length on the course of the Session.

In olden times, it being the Speaker's only chance of letting himself go, the performance was elaborate and extensive. Its opportunity was, however, strictly correlative with the presence of the Sovereign. No Sovereign, no speech. Possibly ruthless observance of the privilege may have had something to do with the abandonment of the Royal visit, and may influence His Majesty in contemplation of the propriety of resuming the practice.

In the first two years of her reign, 1837 and 1838,

Queen Victoria, proroguing Parliament, was addressed at length by Speaker Abercromby, standing at the Bar in wig and gown, escorted by the Mace, accompanied by the Chaplain, and inconveniently backed up from behind by a mob of members. The last Speaker who monopolised enjoyment of the privilege was Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, afterwards Viscount Eversley, and up to a recent time still with us. He it was who, on the 12th of August 1854, made the last of these speeches to Queen Victoria, then in the prime of life and the fulness of domestic happiness. The oration, preserved in the sepulchre of Hansard, dealt largely with the Crimean War, at that time in progress. If Mr. Gully were called upon by the presence of the King to revive the custom he would, by striking coincidence, find a theme at hand in a war far exceeding that of the Crimea, alike in duration, in loss of blood, and of treasure.

It is a saddening reflection that within the

A narrow memory of
Escape. the present generation the nearest approach to bad language spoken in the House of Lords should have come from the Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury). The event befell on one of the closing nights of last Session. The subject under discussion was the Royal Declaration Bill, which Lord Rosebery

THE LORD CHANCELLOR HAS A NARROW ESCAPE.

attacked in a speech of unusual vigour. It was the outcome of the work of a committee over which the Lord Chancellor presided. Lord

Rosebery, *inter alia*, charged the committee with being unduly sensitive to criticism.

"I am not at all sensitive to the noble earl's observations," said the Lord Chancellor, "and I do not believe there is one member of the committee who cares a ——"

Happily the Lord Chancellor stopped, almost as he breathed the objectionable word, involuntarily formed on the lips of noble lords listening. A burst of laughter giving him pause, he continued: "Well, I do not want to use disagreeable expressions, and I will say there is no member who cares for the noble earl's criticisms." This was felt to be rather a weak conclusion compared with what the sentence earlier promised. It was at least more Parliamentary.

The Lord Chancellor was in particularly lively form at this sitting. Lord Rosebery's argument was that the form of declaration recommended by the Bill was so
**Amenities in
the Lords.** phrased that any one might take it. "Do you suppose," he said, "that Charles II. would not have made this declaration with a ready voice and an easy conscience? And yet Charles II.," he added, with tremendous thump on the table sufficient in force to have taken off the head of Charles I., "died in communion with the Church of Rome."

Noble lords looked on with raised eyebrows and slightly curled lips. This sort of thing was all very well in the House of Commons. They had heard of—some had seen—Mr. Gladstone standing at the table whacking the brass-bound box or beating the palm of his left hand with his right, with noise that almost drowned his ordered speech. But to have a belted earl thumping the table in the House of Lords was quite a new thing. It came nearer to presage of abolition of the institution than anything else uttered at Northampton or elsewhere. The Lord Chancellor, in a concluding sentence of his speech, neatly phrased reproach of this flagrant departure from House of Lords form.

"I feel," he said, "as strongly on this matter as does the noble earl, though I admit I have no piece of furniture

“ A BELTED EARL THUMPING THE TABLE.”

within my reach to enable me by strength of muscle to supply lack of argument."

It was assumed and asserted at the time that Mr. Dillon beat the record when early this Session he gave the lie direct to Mr. Chamberlain. That is not the case. The record was established by the late ^{The Lie direct.} Dr. Tanner, though to give Mr. Dillon his due he freshened it up by the embroidery of an adjective. It was towards the end of the Session of 1895 that Dr. Tanner broke out. From the opening of the sitting he had been in ominous state of unrest. According to his habit it developed the form of extreme desire that other members should observe orderly conduct. Once, Mr. Balfour venturing to smile at some bombast on the part of Mr. John Redmond, Dr. Tanner rose and protested that he "felt bound to call attention to the indecorous behaviour of the gentleman who is Leader of the House." Later, Mr. Balfour, dealing with the state of public business, made the obvious remark that at the period of the Session reached it was waste of time for private members to bring in new Bills. To Dr. Tanner's active logical mind this irresistibly suggested affairs in the Far East.

"Does the right hon. gentleman," he shouted, sternly regarding Mr. Balfour, "really intend to try and prevent the murder of any more missionaries in China?"

After this, anything might be expected, and it was not long in coming. In debate on the Address—the first Session of the new Parliament opened, of all dates, on the 12th of August—Mr. Harrington observed that the late Government had run away from Home Rule.

"That's a lie!" shouted Dr. Tanner.

The Speaker was up in a minute, calling upon him to withdraw the offensive word and apologise.

"No, no," said the Doctor, remaining seated and still burning with desire that everything should be done in order, "I cannot get up, you know, so long as you are on your legs."

That was indisputable, it being a serious breach of order for a member to rise whilst the Speaker is upstanding. Without more ado Dr. Tanner was named. In the absence of Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain moved the resolution of suspension. The Doctor refusing to withdraw, the Serjeant-at-Arms was bidden to remove him. As he approached, the apostle of order rose and walked down the gangway. At sight of Mr. Chamberlain seated on the Treasury Bench a storm of fury shook him. Drawing himself up to full height, stretching forth his arm as if levelling a pistol at the head of the Colonial

"JUDAS! JUDAS!"

Secretary, he yelled, "Judas! Judas! Judas!" and so went forth.

This was his last prominent appearance on the Parliamentary stage.

What is familiarly known in the House of Commons as the Twelve o'clock Rule is commonly regarded as a modern invention. But there is nothing new under the sun, and this particular product is at least two and a half centuries old. In the Journals of the House there will be found, under date 1645, the following Standing Order: "That no new motion of any business whatsoever shall be made after twelve o'clock, and that Mr. Speaker should not hear any new motion after twelve o'clock." Two years later, in order to make the matter

Twelve o'clock
with a
Difference.

more clear, it was ordered that "as soon as the clock strikes twelve the House shall rise."

There is this important difference between the two conditions of things. Whilst with us the Twelve o'clock Rule means midnight, in the seventeenth century it struck at noon.

Members who, in debate on the new Procedure Rules, grumbled at the prospect of meeting as early as two in the afternoon may be reminded that in the time of James I. eight o'clock in the morning was the hour at which the Speaker took the Chair. Once at least in the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth they met at 6 A.M. That was a special occasion, when, having obtained permission of Her Majesty to attend at eight, the Commons held a preliminary meeting "to treat on what shall be delivered touching the reasons of their proceedings." In 1614 the House met at 7 A.M., an order that remained in force for twenty-eight years. But the wind was tempered to the shorn lamb, inasmuch as the Stuart Kings were accustomed to interpose prolonged recesses in the sittings of their Parliaments.

Mr. Field is acknowledged to have taken the prize for bulls. Mr. Wyndham having replied to a question on the paper, the member for St. Patrick's Division of Dublin rose in all the majesty of a spotless shirt-front and protuberant cuffs. A Prime Bull.

"Mr. Speaker, sir," he said, in tragic tones, "arising out of that answer, I wish to say I did not hear what the right hon. gentleman said."

For a bull that is about as perfect an animal as is bred out of Ireland. It is one of the rules feebly governing the putting of questions that, when a reply has been given by a Minister, further interrogation is permissible only in direct connection with the answer. Whenever an Irish member wants to put a supplementary question—and he invariably does—he prefaces it with a formula "arising out of that answer." Hence Mr. Field's stumbling.

In the earliest days of his reign King Edward VII. introduced a new order of things in connection with the **The King's Speech.** Speech from the Throne at the opening of the Session. During the reign of Queen Victoria it was the practice not only to furnish copies of the document to the Leaders of the Opposition in both Houses for the information of their colleagues, but to communicate a full *précis* to the newspapers. By order of the King, whilst the Leaders of the Opposition were last Session and this provided with a copy of the Speech, which they read before



IN THE BULL-FIELD.

dinner to their guests, the newspapers were left to their own devices in the effort to forecast the Speech.

This is even a wider departure from the practice that obtained in the days of George IV. No secret was then made about the Speech, copies being circulated among members some days before the Session opened. Canning mentions, in a passage quoted by Mr. Walpole, a curious practice that obtained in his day. "It was the custom," he said, "the night before the commencement of a Session to read to such members as might think proper to assemble to hear it, at a place called the Cockpit, the Speech with which

the King's Ministers had advised His Majesty to open Session." Cockpit and custom have both disappeared. The original Cockpit was part of the building of ancient Whitehall, and came in course of time to be devoted to the business and convenience of the Treasury.

In Parliamentary records the most dilatory apology made by a member of the House of Commons I find in

"Adequate" records of more
Apology. than sixty years ago. The offender was Mr. Kearsley, member for Wigan. He seems to have been, in personal appearance as in other respects, a character. He is described as having "a little, round, pug-looking face, with an ample harvest of black, bushy hair, with whiskers to match; a little, thick-set man with an inclination to corpulence." Notice is taken of "an expressive look of self-complacency irradiating his globularly-formed, country-complexioned countenance, while his small, bright eyes ever peered triumphantly over his little cocked-up nose."

A FANCY PORTRAIT.

In the Session of 1836, the House being in Committee on the Stamp Duty and Excise, Mr. Kearsley, following Mr. Roebuck, appealing directly to Lord John Russell, asked "with what pleasure he had listened to the disgusting speech of the honourable and learned member for Bath." The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Bernal (known to later Parliaments as Bernal Osborne), ruled the expression out of order and called for its withdrawal.

"Sir," said Mr. Kearsley, "a more disgusting speech I never heard."

Thereupon, amid shouts of "Order!" he left his seat, and with a profound bow to the Chair, and a gracious wave of farewell with his right hand, made for the door. A crowd standing there blocked his way and Mr. Kearsley returned to his seat. Mr. Paul Methuen, grandfather of our wounded Lord Methuen, who sat through several Parliaments as member for Wiltshire, insisted upon retraction of the offensive word and apology. Mr. Kearsley was on his legs again before the Chairman could say a word, and cried aloud, "Paul, Paul, why persecutest thou me?" In the end, after much pressure, Mr. Kearsley withdrew the word but did not apologise.

In this same Parliament sat Mr. Brotherton, member for Salford, who distinguished himself in a more sane manner.

Early Closing. In boyhood a factory hand, he in course of time ran a factory of his own, which made him one of the richest of Manchester men. His predominant idea in connection with Parliamentary life was to get members off to bed by half-past twelve. Session after Session he was in his place, and on the hand of the clock passing the half-hour after midnight he rose and moved the adjournment. If a big debate were in progress he refrained from interference. His conviction was that no new business should be taken after half-past twelve, wherein he was nearly half a century before his time.

CHAPTER XLV

AUGUST

THE manuscripts preserved at Welbeck Abbey by the Duke of Portland contain some interesting references to the representative of the Harcourt family in the classical times of Queen Anne. On the 28th of November Simon Harcourt, Lord Keeper, took possession of Newnham, to-day the home of the head of the Harcourt clan. Archives of
the Harcourt
Family.

"It is," writes Canon Stratford to Edward Harley, later second Earl of Oxford, "a very pleasant situation and a fine estate. Lord Keeper pays for it £17,000, and Tom Rowney, who managed this bargain for him, tells me it is the cheapest pennyworth that ever was bought in Oxfordshire."

The Lord Keeper had previously lived at Cockrop, where within two years he laid out £4000. "He has bought," adds the envious Canon, "Sir Edmund Warcop's estate that joins to Cockrop for £10,000 and now this purchase for £17,000. It is plain there is money to be got by the Seals, and formerly money was got in the Treasury."

The Lord Keeper had a son who bore the baptismal name of Simpkin. The Lord Keeper put him up as a candidate for Oxford University. "Harcourt," A Queen Anne writes the Canon, "has been in town since "Loulou." Sunday. He spent Sunday evening at the Deanery. He dined there yesterday. He passed by my lodgings both

times without calling. I am not much mortified. [Oh Canon, Canon.] I have known the time when father as well as son would have been glad to come here when they could be admitted into no other house."

Five days later Loulou—I mean Simpkin—mindful that the Canon had a vote and some influence, remembered his old friend. "Young Harcourt sups with me to-night," the Canon writes, under date 7th December 1712. "He called on me last night. I asked him if he had not gone by my door every day this week. He owned it, but said that he still designed to call on me before he left the town. I told him I believed I was obliged to the weather for seeing him. After a short visit he appointed to come with T. Rowney and sup with me this evening. I hope," adds the Canon, always ready, so to speak, to "go off" when the image of the Lord Keeper crosses his mind, "you will allow me to have learned somewhat since I belong to the Court when I can be upon a point of compliments with the son after I have been used so by the father. If I go on to improve in this way, I may in time be qualified for better preferment."

Through the correspondence flash many glimpses of Queen Anne's Lord Keeper, a big, bustling, competent, successful man, carrying everything before him in private company and in public life. A masterful spirit, with great contempt for mediocrity, and no cultured gift of reticence in expressing his views about it. As a study of heredity this is interesting and valuable, showing to the present generation how, in the course of three centuries, a family type may be revived.

At Newnham there hangs at this day a portrait of Lord Keeper Harcourt. When, a few years ago, a historic fancy dress ball was given at Devonshire House, Sir
Lord Halsbury
as Queen
Anne.
 William Harcourt went in the character of his ancestor. The arrangement was not difficult, since the gown of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of to-day is, in nearly every respect, identical with that worn by the Lord Keeper two hundred years ago.

Amongst the stories treasured in connection with the social triumph planned and carried out by the Duchess of Devonshire is one relating to the present Lord Chancellor and Simon Harcourt's distinguished descendant. Lord Halsbury went to the ball in the character of George III. Coming across Sir William Harcourt, and a little mixed in his dates, he, with his habitual playfulness, said :—

"Are you *my* Lord Chancellor?"

"Yes," said Sir William

Harcourt,
"if your

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT AS LORD
KEEPER IN THE TIME OF QUEEN ANNE.

Majesty chances to be Queen Anne."

It was said at the time of the ball that Lord Halsbury's philandering as George III. was coldly looked upon in the highest quarter. "A little too near the family," Queen Victoria said, when she heard of the Lord Chancellor's selection of an otherwise not inappropriate character.

The gown of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is rarely seen by the public, which is a pity. It is as handsome as it is costly, lending a

A Historic
Gown.

stateliness to the figure unapproachable by the art of the modern tailor. I have a vivid recollection of seeing Mr. Gladstone arrayed in it on the occasion of the opening by the Queen of the new Law Courts.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR
AS GEORGE III.

Striking in appearance, even when he wore a shabby old cape endeared by association of two score years, he in

this gracious robe of silk took on a new dignity. A new gown costs £150, and as it may not be worn out of office it is customary for the incoming Chancellor to purchase his predecessor's robe at a suitable reduction. In recent times there have been two notable exceptions to the rule. When, in February 1868, Mr. Gladstone succeeded Mr. Disraeli at the Treasury the outgoing Chancellor declined to sell his raiment to his successor. There was a very good reason, which precludes the necessity of searching for personal animus to account for the departure from custom. The robe had originally belonged to Mr. Pitt, and Disraeli preferred possession of the historic relic to a cheque for £100.

The other case was that of Lord Randolph Churchill, who possessed himself of Mr. Gladstone's Chancellor's gown. Mr. Goschen would have taken the Chancellor of the Exchequer's gown with his office. Lord Randolph would hold no truck with his successor.

With the courage and originality that distinguish new members, Mr. Horner this Session brought forward the **The Ladies' Gallery.** question of removing the grille from the Ladies' Gallery in the House of Commons. It is curious what fascination this topic has for new members, and how genuine is their belief that in broaching it they are making fresh discovery of debatable land. Since another member of the family, Little Jack Horner, sat in a corner, his research and his self-appreciation crowned by the unexpected discovery of a plum in a Christmas pie, nothing has exceeded the complacency of the member for North Lambeth in fathering this fad.

The rights of women at Westminster is a cause far older than members of the reformed House of Commons can recall. Seventy years ago West Gloucestershire was represented by Mr. Grantley Berkeley. The Commons at that time sat in the old House, which provided no special accommodation for ladies attending the debate. Mr. Grantley Berkeley, pained at the inconvenience to which

ladies were put, moved a resolution authorising their admission to the gallery reserved for strangers of the other sex. This he made an annual, after the later fashion of Mr. Cobden with his motion for the abolition of the Corn Laws. Every Session the member for West Gloucestershire moved that ladies be admitted to the gallery, and every Session an ungentle majority voted him down.

The effects of his advocacy were seen when the new Houses of Parliament included a gallery for the occupation of ladies. That it should be shut off from the rest of the House by a lattice-work, a device common enough in Mohammedan lands, testifies to the timidity with which the innovation was authorised. For many years new members have in succession brought the subject up and proposed to remove the grille. Mr. Herbert Gladstone being First Commissioner of Works (and not yet married) was the first and last Minister who showed disposition to yield to the appeal avowedly put forward on behalf of ladies frequenting the House. He speedily discovered he had made a mistake and the subject dropped.

Personal information gleaned over a pretty wide field of acquaintance with *habituées* of the Ladies' Galleries—for there are two, one pertaining to the dominion of the Speaker's wife—leads me to the conviction that by a considerable and important majority the privacy bestowed by the grille more than compensates for any inconvenience inseparable from the arrangement.

CHAPTER XLVI

OCTOBER

ON the publication of the list of Coronation honours the House of Commons was much piqued at the choice of Liberals apparently made by Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour. I am assured on high personal authority that His Majesty's Ministers had nothing to do with the selection made in the Liberal camp. His Majesty conveyed to the Prime Minister intimation of desire that in the special circumstances the bestowal of honours should, as far as possible, be free from trace of political partisanship. The only way to meet this command was to divide the honours allotted to political personages. This was fairly,



even liberally, done. But the procedure took the form of placing at the disposal of the Leaders of the Opposition in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons a certain number of honours, leaving allotment to them.

This done, the ordinary course was followed, formal communication

"NOLO CORONETARI."

of the bestowal of the honour being, save in respect of the

peerages, conveyed by the Ministers. The new peers received holograph letters from the King. The one written to Sir William Harcourt was a charming example of the graceful manner and kind heart of His Majesty. It will be an heirloom as precious as a patent of the peerage. On Sir William Harcourt begging to be excused leaving an assembly in which he had lived and worked for thirty-four years, His Majesty wrote a second long letter marked by even increased warmth of friendship and appreciation for the veteran statesman.

The distinction of Privy Councillor is, after all, the highest a Sovereign can bestow. It was borne by Disraeli in his prime. It sufficed Peel and Gladstone to the last. Mr. Arthur Balfour, with choice of stars and ribbons galore, not to mention a peerage at his command, is proudly content with its simplicity.

**Threatened
Revolt of the
Judges.**

It is true that of late years some alloy has been introduced into the aggregate of purest metal. When the earliest arrangements for the Coronation were settled it was discovered that the judges were divided into two classes, those who were Privy Councillors and those who were not. The former had allotted to them especially good points of view in the Abbey, the other judges—and judges, when divested of wig and gown, are, after all, almost human—murmured at what they regarded as an invidious distinction. A meeting was held at which there was talk of resenting the slight by abstaining from attendance. Good temper and contentment were restored by the wise words of the youngest judge present.

“When we remember,” he said, “that X. and Y. are members of the Privy Council, don’t you think the distinction really rests with us who are not?”

The fact that their learned brother had sat for ten years in the House of Commons in the same political camp as the right hon. gentlemen of whom he spoke sharpened the point of the observation. The judges resolved to take no notice of the arbitrary division of the Bench, ignoring the pretension it conveyed of the superiority of Privy Councillors.

Remembering the success of his prognostication, it is interesting to know what Mr. Chamberlain thinks of the prospect of the next General Election. He does not, at present, think about it at all, being convinced that, bar unparalleled accident, the present Parliament will run its full appointed course. It will be time enough somewhere about autumn 1905 to begin to form opinion on the issue of a General Election. But the Colonial Secretary has a well-defined and fearless opinion about the result of a General Election should it be forced at the present time. He believes that if it were to take place next week the Government would be reinstated in power with at least the numerical majority that placed them there in October 1900.

There was something tragic about the death of Johnston of Ballykilbeg. He was in the House on a Thursday night, when he heard Mr. Wyndham, with that pedantry that pertains to officials, upset a cherished project. Rostrevor is, it appears, a stronghold of Roman Catholicism in the North of Ireland. *Argal*, it was the very place upon which, on the 12th of July, anniversary of a blessed memory, Orangemen should march with sashes flaunting and drums beating. Rostrevor, to do it justice, did not shirk the ordeal. On the contrary, its inhabitants joyously prepared to welcome the coming guests. Then the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant steps on the scene and, with deplorable lack of human sympathy, prohibits the excursion on the prosaic ground that if it were permitted there would be a battle-royal, a field strewn with dead and wounded. With the best intentions he added

"A Tender-
hearted
Fanatic."

THE LATE MR. JOHNSTON
OF BALLYKILBEG.

to the aggravation of the disappointment. Moved by protests against the prohibition, he consented to the Orangemen going as far as Warren Point, whence, with the aid of field-glasses, they might catch glimpses of the Catholics waiting for them at Rostrevor. Though well-meant, this was a concession almost inhuman in its ingenious cruelty. It was like spreading a toothsome banquet before a hungry tiger, taking care that the meal should be set outside the impassable bars of his cage.

Johnston of Ballykilbeg, depressed at this extraordinary conduct on the part of a Government he had loyally supported, immediately left for Ireland to take part in the Downpatrick celebration of the happy day. In the course of the ceremony he caught a chill, and exactly a week after he left the House of Commons in his usual health the blinds were drawn down at Ballykilbeg, and there was a vacancy in the representation of West Belfast.

Mr. Johnston was a curious compound of the fanatic and the man of tender heart. I do not know whether in his long career, crowned with the rank of Grand ^{Inspector of} Master of Grand Black Chapter of Ireland, he ^{Fisheries.} ever really, overtly or covertly, heaved half a brick at a Papist; whether, indeed, he ever shouted the watchword of militant Orangeism which consigns the Holy Father to eternal perdition. One never knows what unexpected things a man may do in moments of excitement. Out of Belfast Johnston of Ballykilbeg was the mildest-mannered man that ever wore an orange scarf. The spectacle of Irish Nationalist members seated opposite him, putting questions designed to belittle the memory of William III. and extol the parish priest, occasionally led him into truculent observations. He had a way of supplementing such inquiries by others designed to show matters in quite another light. They involved aspersions at least equalled in malignity to the question on the paper. But no one seemed a penny the worse. The Irish members boisterously cheered him. The Chief Secretary got out of the difficulty by observing that he had "no information on the point mentioned by my hon. friend," and

then turned to read the written answer to the question on the paper provided for him by the Irish Office.

For one of his kindly disposition, Johnston of Ballykilbeg's life was marked by turmoil. He emerged from obscurity in the arms of the police, who arrested him, *flagrante delicto*, taking part in a proscribed Orange procession. That was quite enough for the people of Belfast. They straightway elected him their member, and through the prison door Mr. Johnston entered the portals of the House of Commons. After he had been in the House ten years Disraeli, who loved a joke and was not to be barred off enjoyment by ordinary considerations, made him Inspector of Fisheries. At the date when he was inducted in his important office the only acquaintance with fisheries or fish Johnston of Ballykilbeg boasted was that acquired at the breakfast-table, where was served the homely haddock or the frisky fresh herring. But he could learn, and the salary was £800 a year.

Unfortunately, after he had served for seven years and was really beginning to master the difference between fly-fishing and gathering in the teeming multitude of the deep in a net, he strayed into a meeting of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland. A speech made by one of the authorities stirred his blood. Up he got and delivered an oration revolutionary in its tendencies, almost blood-thirsty in its aspirations. Certainly it was incongruous on the part of one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Irish Fisheries. Notice was called to the tirade in the House of Commons, with the result that Earl Spencer, then Lord Lieutenant, was obliged to dismiss the eloquent Inspector. South Belfast retorted by electing him its member, and Johnston of Ballykilbeg returned in triumph to the House of Commons.

In the very last speech he delivered, within ten days of his sudden cutting off, he alluded to the dismissal of 1885. The event, he said, followed on a question put by Mr. Tim Healy, who he believed had ever since regretted his interposition. "Hear, hear!" cried Tim, heartily. It was a happy accident that, in what chanced to be his last speech in an assembly

where he took his seat thirty-four years ago, there should have been sounded this truce with his ancient foes in politics and religion. The warfare was, in truth, mimic. The Irish Nationalist members respected the rugged eccentricity of Johnston of Ballykilbeg, and he had a sneaking affection for them.

It was a mark of his indomitable character, in small things as in great, that he was thrice married.

CHAPTER XLVII

NOVEMBER

GENTLEMEN of England who sit at home at ease reading their morning paper containing columns of Parliamentary report, little reckon of another record of Parliamentary proceedings painstakingly compiled, in due time stoutly bound, and stored in the Palace of Westminster. These are the Journals of the House of Commons, to-day edited by the Clerks of the Table as they were by their predecessors three hundred years ago. Lining the long corridor of the House of Commons, which cuts across the building from the Lobby where the bust of Cromwell surveys the scene to the door of the office of the Speaker's Secretary, the calf-bound volumes stand row on row chronicling in severely simple style the history of England. Beginning long before morning newspapers were established, holding the field at a time when the reporting of debates in Parliament was a criminal offence, these musty volumes tell the tale of the Sessions in unbroken continuity. Rarely opened, their existence known only to comparatively few, they plod along adding yearly to their bulk, scrupulously preserving in this twentieth century the manner of writing and of printing observed in the seventeenth.

Here is a transcript, capital letters and italics duly preserved, of record of a historic event under date Wednesday, 23rd January 1901: "IT having pleased Almighty God to take to His mercy our late Most Gracious Sovereign

Lady Queen *Victoria* of blessed memory, who departed this life yesterday between the hours of Six and Seven of the clock in the evening, at *Osborne* The King's Accession.

House, in the *Isle of Wight*; and Her late Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, and others, having met this day at *Saint James's Palace*, and having directed that His Royal Highness *Albert Edward* Prince of *Wales* be proclaimed King To-morrow at Nine of the clock, by the Style and Title of *Edward* the Seventh: At Four of the clock the House met pursuant to the Statute made in the Sixth year of the reign of Her late Majesty Queen *Anne*, intituled, 'An Act for the Security of Her Majesty's Person and Government, and of the Succession to the Crown of *Great Britain* in the Protestant Line.' And Mr. Speaker and several other Members (*Francis Broxholm Grey Jenkinson*, Esquire, C.B., and *Arthur William Nicholson*, Esquire, the Clerks Assistant, and the other Clerks attending according to their duty) came into the House, whereupon Mr.

MR. SPEAKER TAKING THE OATH.

Speaker first alone, standing upon the upper step of the Chair, took and subscribed the Oath required by Law. Then several Members took and subscribed the Oath; and several Members made and subscribed the Affirmation required by Law."

With the exception of one line this is, with variation of date and proper name, a copy of the entry recording the death of British Sovereigns since the Restoration. An innovation appears in the concluding line, where the fact that several members made affirmation instead of taking the Oath is recorded.

In the *Thousand and One Nights*, each chapter con-

cludes with a certain monotony. The break of day always interrupts Scheherazade at the most critical point "And then." in her story, and is recorded in a phrase that varies slightly in form. A similar peculiarity marks the Journals of the House of Commons. Save towards the end of the Session, when by special order the House is adjourned without question put, a Minister moves the adjournment as soon as the business on the paper has been disposed of. The last daily entry in the Journals of the House uses a formula more precise in its repetition even than the scheming Scheherazade's welcome of the daylight that brought her fresh respite. Taking the entry of the 15th of February, in the current year, for example, it is written: "And then the House having continued to sit till one minute after twelve of the clock on Friday morning, adjourned till this day."

With necessary variation of hour and day, this is through the centuries the last thing written in the Journal of a sitting of the House of Commons. About the "And then" there is discernible a touch of grateful relief on the part of the Clerk at the close of a more or less laborious sitting.

Another peculiarity of diction in the Journals is found in the formula recording divisions. When the Speaker calls a division he says, "The ayes to the right the noes to the left." In far-off times, some dead and forgotten Clerk of the House of Commons recording such an event naturally dropped into the vernacular of his quiet home or the busy street. He accordingly wrote, "The House divided, the yeas to the right the noes to the left." Adding the figures he concluded the entry with the cooing remark, "So it passed in the negative," or in the affirmative, as the case might be. Thus it is phrased in the Twentieth Century.

These are small things but their touch carries us far back, realising in a flash the antiquity of the mother of Parliaments.

In the volume of the Journal from which I quote, being the 156th, there appears a valuable hint to members about to bring on questions of breach of privilege. In the closing

days of the Session of 1901, the *Globe* frankly discussed some recent performance of the Irish members under the heading "Irish Rowdies." Had the incident been ignored by the persons affronted it would have passed into comparative obscurity and by this time been forgotten. Like most people habitually prone to make violent personal attacks on others, the Irish members are quick to resent approach to reprisals. Desirous above all things to vindicate order and to resent the use of strong language, Mr. John Dillon brought the article under the notice of the House as a breach of privilege. It was accordingly read at the Table of the House, with the immediate consequence that the offensive lines

MR. DILLON ON THE *GLOBE*.

were republished by every paper in the kingdom, the publication complained of being increased a thousandfold.

But the *Globe* received another and more permanent advertisement. In accordance with usage, order was made that the offending article should be entered in the Journals of the House. There it stands at this day, and there it will remain for all time, showing how some publicists, writing in the first year of the new century, regarded the Irish members as "political mercenaries from the Sister Isle," and regretted "their recent outrageous behaviour."

A good deal is heard from time to time of Sir Benjamin Stone's collection of photographs relating to Parliamentary life. The photographs taken on the Terrace of the House

of Commons, multitudinous as they are, form only a section of this unique collection. Like Ulysses, much **Photographer Extraordinary.** has Sir Benjamin travelled, much of men and cities has he seen. Before he entered the House as member for East Birmingham he visited Japan, China, the Straits Settlements, Asia Minor, the West Indies, the Rocky Mountains, Vancouver, and the River Amazon, not to mention ordinary accomplishment in the way of historic places on the Continent of Europe. Wherever he went he carried with him his camera, bringing home photographs of whatever he saw. Nor are these of the ordinary snap-shot character common to Cook's tourists. They are works of art, skilful use of the platinum process giving them the appearance rather of engravings than of photographs. The fact is, if Sir Benjamin had not been dazzled by the dignity of being five times Mayor of Sutton-Coldfield, he would have been—perhaps he is—the most successful photographer of the age.

In addition to being an artistic photographer he is an accomplished writer, having recorded in several volumes his travels in Japan, Brazil, Spain, and Norway. His practice, extended over many years, has been that when he takes a photograph of a memorable scene or a distinguished person he writes a descriptive note, which is affixed to the picture when it is stored away and catalogued. The consequence is that his collection, which now numbers 25,000 separate plates, is an unparalleled pictorial history of the world.

This rare achievement will not be lost to the public and to posterity. Sir Benjamin tells me he has bequeathed the collection to the care of trustees, with direction to take whatever steps they in their judgment think best calculated to add to the instruction and entertainment of the public. Whether the pictures, with personal notes or descriptions of scenery, shall be published in book form, or whether they shall be deposited in some public institution, is a matter Sir Benjamin leaves to the unfettered discretion of the trustees. Amongst the series of pictures of immediate home interest are photographs of every part of the interior of the structure of the Palace of Westminster.

The Tower of London has been dealt with in the same minute and masterly fashion.

During the summer Session Sir Benjamin Stone had a rich harvest of celebrities in the foreign, Indian, and Colonial celebrities coming over for the Coronation. His studio is a portion of the Terrace belonging to the deserted section pertaining to the House of Lords. With quick artistic eye



SIR B. STONE POSING A SUBJECT.

he discovered the usefulness of the accessory of a wrought-iron gateway opening on to the Terrace. With this background his subjects are posed. It is a memorable procession, including all the more famous past and present members who have held seats during the last seven years. In addition is the fringe of foreign notabilities who flock to the Lobby of the House of Commons. The latest photograph of Mr. Chamberlain was taken by Sir Benjamin on the day peace was signed at Pretoria.

Talking about the charge of inconsistency brought against

him, seeing that he, once the risen hope of the Radical party, is now the chief buttress of a Ministry of strong Imperialistic tendencies, Mr. Chamberlain tells me a curious and interesting story. Forty-five years ago he, having just reached his majority, took an active part in canvassing Birmingham against Mr. John Bright. The great Corn Leaguer, then ousted from Manchester, was his *beau idéal* of a political leader save in one respect. Mr. Bright was directly antagonistic to what in these days has come to be called Imperialism.

It was the year of the China War. The situation is vividly described by Lord Palmerston in his address to the electors of Tiverton: "An insolent barbarian, breathing authority at Canton, violated the British Flag, broke the engagements of treaties, offered rewards for the heads of British subjects in that part of China, and planned their destruction by murder, assassination, and poison." After describing how a vote of censure on the Government was "carried by a combination of political parties not till this last Session united," Lord Palmerston asks, "Will the British nation give their support to men who have thus endeavoured to make the humiliation and degradation of their country the stepping-stone to power?"

Young Joseph Chamberlain, in a voice not then familiar in public life, emphatically answered "No," and did his best to prevent Birmingham affording John Bright sanctuary after being driven from Manchester on account of his hostility to Lord Palmerston. Thus was the political child father of the Imperialist statesman of to-day.

Wherever two or three lawyers are gathered together, stories about Frank Lockwood still crop up. His oldest friends, his warmest admirers at the Bar, admit that soundness of knowledge on difficult points of law was not his especial gift or the basis of his high reputation. Of equity he knew hardly anything, a circumstance that did not prevent his accepting a brief involving equity rules and principles.

With one such in his hand, he was arguing one day when the judge, who knew his weak point, blandly said, "Which do you think, Mr. Lockwood, is the case bearing most directly upon your line of argument?"

"My lord," Lockwood quickly answered, "there are so many cases in my mind I do not like to discriminate."

He later got out of a similar difficulty in a case involving an alleged breach of patent. The counsel on the other side, most learned in the matter, talked fluently about various kinds of dynamos. Lockwood, as one of his friends in court remarked, would not have known one dynamo from another if he had met them walking arm in arm along Pall Mall. In this dilemma he turned towards the jury with flushed face, and indignantly said, "Dynos! What, gentlemen, do we care about these things? Let us get at the truth."

I do not know whether he got at the truth. He certainly got his verdict.

The third story relates to a judge, now gone to a higher court, who had an ineradicable, embarrassing habit of interrupting counsel. One day he was so aggravating that Lockwood, who was addressing the jury, ventured upon respectful remonstrance.

"Well, well," said the judge, "I shall reserve my remarks till I sum up."

"Yes, my lord," said Lockwood quietly; "that, I believe, is the usual course."

Some years ago I shared with Frank Lockwood the honour of being the guest of the Sheffield Press Club at their annual dinner. I remember the twinkle in his eye that flashed over a little aside in a speech responding to the toast of his health. Alluding to his long connection with Sheffield in the capacity of Recorder, he said: "I hope that during the ten years I was connected with this city I gave satisfaction——" (here the company broke into a loud cheer). "I was about to add," continued Lockwood, gravely, "I gave satisfaction to those gentlemen who came before me in my judicial capacity. I did not realise till I heard the applause that there were so many present here to-night."

Some years ago, a compassionate observer of this daily quandary, I threw out a practical suggestion. Why should not members on either side in search of a dinner pair wear a bit of coloured ribbon in their buttonhole indicating their desire? If that were too simple a device for adoption by legislators, it would be easy to keep in an accessible place in the Library or Tea Room a book in which might be written the names of members on either side desiring a dinner pair. Under either system an arrangement would be quickly made, members being spared the wearisome search.

The idea was very popular in the House, but no one took on himself to arrange for putting it in practice. Nothing came of it, and the dreary afternoon's hunt by haggard-eyed members went on as before.

A fresh danger has developed under the new rule. But it chiefly affects His Majesty's Ministers. The sitting being suspended at 7.30, members are free to go off **A real Danger.** to dinner on the understanding that they will again be in their places at nine o'clock, when business recommences. For an ordinary dinner at a club, or a quiet meal at home within reasonable distance of Westminster, an hour and a half should serve. In the case of joining a dinner-party, it is cutting it a little fine to leave the House at 7.30, go home and dress, get to your destination, and be back on the stroke of nine.

Failure to observe the understanding is, however, a serious matter for the Ministry. The greater number of the Irish Nationalists do not leave the precincts of the House during the dinner-hour. Many others on the Opposition side find the place more comfortable than any alternative offered to them, and also remain. On more than one occasion during the earlier part of the Session Ministers had some exceedingly anxious moments as the fingers of the clock slowly moved beyond the figure IX. It several times happened that for fifteen or twenty minutes the strongest Ministry of modern times was actually at the mercy of the Opposition. The latter, borrowing the tactics of Brer

Rabbit, had only to "lay low, say nuffin," and rush a division. On one occasion, on a really important issue, they ran the Government majority down to twenty-nine.

It was after this that the Whips devised a system which, if it would only work, would keep the fort safely garrisoned. The Ministerial forces were divided into two wings, **Double Shifts.** one moiety pledged to be in their places at nine o'clock sharp on Monday and Wednesday nights, the other mustering on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Excellent in theory, this did not equal expectation in practice. Members of the House of Commons are, after all, only human. In the human breast there is ineradicable tendency to believe that some one else, equally pledged in such circumstances, is sure to be punctual, and if you are unavoidably a little late no danger to the Empire will accrue.

The working of this sanguine view of other people's reliability was shown with increasing force as the Session lengthened. With a majority which, even after Leeds, exceeds 130 the Ministry should be safe between 9 and 9.30 P.M. Experience shows that they are not, and some night there will be grievous calamity.

If these things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? If a majority of 130 cannot be depended upon to hold the fort between 9 and 10 P.M., what would happen in the case of a majority of forty—all Mr. Gladstone had at his command ten years ago, when he carried the Home Rule Bill?

The only hope of salvation for His Majesty's Ministers is alteration of the dinner-hour through the London season. Of late years it has steadily advanced. Most of **Society's** us can remember a time when invitations were **Dinner-hour.** issued for 7.45, with the understanding that the guests would be seated at table on the stroke of eight. Perhaps, in the majority of cases, eight o'clock is the hour now named, with the understanding that no one shall be later than 8.15. But the fashion of inviting guests to dinner at 8.15, dinner being served a quarter of an hour later, is growing. In such circumstances it is obviously impossible for members of the

House of Commons dining out to be on guard at Westminster at nine o'clock.

Compared with the federation of the Empire or a penny off or on the income-tax this may seem a trivial matter. In the Whips' Room it is recognised that upon it may depend the fate of the Ministry. In the dinner-hour of Friday, 21st of June 1895, Lord Rosebery's Government was defeated in the House of Commons by a majority of seven.

• THE CORDITE CONSPIRACY—MR. BRODRICK APPLIES THE TORCH.

The occasion was apparently trivial, an attack on the administration of the War Office affecting the supply of cordite. Had the Ministerialists foreseen the gravity of the issue they would have remained at their posts and repelled the guerilla attack. They thought little about it, went off to dinner, and came back to learn that the Ministry had been defeated. On the following Monday Sir William Harcourt announced the resignation of the Government, a step that made way for Lord Salisbury's third Administration.

What stupendous phases of history followed thereupon,

succeeding each other through seven memorable years, we know. But few of us reflect on the circumstance that the possibility was created by a snatch division taken in the dinner-hour in a half-empty House.

I hear from one of the house-party a pretty story of an adventure that some years ago befell one of our hereditary legislators. It happened before he came into the peerage. He was staying at a country house honoured by the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales, now our gracious Sovereigns. Her Royal Highness having retired for the night, the gentlemen of the party sat down to cards. In the course of a game at whist one gentleman, whom we will call A., revoked, an incident made the subject of much good-humoured remonstrance.

At Cross
Purposes.

The heir to a peerage, whom we will call B., in due time went off to bed. Opening what he believed was his bedroom door, he, to his horror, discovered that he had hopped on that belonging to the Princess of Wales (Queen Alexandra). He was so upset by the accident that, making some excuse, he left the house after an early breakfast and fled back to town.

The Princess came down to luncheon on the day following the awkward incident and found herself seated by A. He was the object of renewed chaff about his revoking, veiled allusions to the slip being made. Her Royal Highness, not having heard of the incident at the card-table and not quite catching the drift of the conversation, turned to A. and, with an amused smile, said: "So it was *you* who made the little mistake last night?"

A., who had not heard of the bedroom incident and was full of his own misadventure, bowed his head and blushing said: "Yes; but I assure your Royal Highness it's not a thing I'm accustomed to do."

It was not till he met B. in London a week later that he realised the scope of his confession.

INDEX

Abercromby, Rt. Hon. James, Baron Dunfermline, Speaker in 1837	515	Lord, Financial Secretary to the Treasury	226
Abraham, W., member for Gla- morgan (Rhondda), Welsh bard under title of <i>Mabon</i>	375	Althorp, Lord, afterwards 3rd Earl Spencer : Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1830-34	94
Acland : Rt. Hon. A. H. D., ex-Vice- President of the Council 301, 338 Sir Thomas Dyke	338	References 248, 280	
Adam, Sir William, Liberal <i>Whip</i> , 1874	267	Alverstone, Richard E. Webster, 1st Lord, sketch by Sir Frank Lockwood 136, 137	
Governor of Madras	270	Ameer of Afghanistan, reference	130
Reference	283	<i>Annals of Our Time</i> , reference and quotation	190
Addington, Henry, Baron Sid- mouth, Speaker, 1789	255	Anne, Queen : the Act passed during her reign relating to ministerial appointments 499, 500	
Addison, Joseph, reference	17	the Harcourt family in that period 525-527	
Admiralty, a colloquy at the	31	Statute relating to the succes- sion, reference	537
Agnew, Sir William	210	"Another place"	86
Airlie, David Stanley, 10th Earl of, killed in South Africa	407	Appropriation Bill, reference	440
Airy, Sir R.	339	Arabi Pasha	438
Akers-Douglas, Rt. Hon. A., reference	28	Arch, Joseph : attitude of the Squirearchy towards	63
Albemarle, George Thomas Keppel, 6th Earl of, his early impression of Glad- stone	236	an honoured guest at Sand- ringham	64
Albert, Prince. <i>See</i> Prince Consort		Argyll : Archibald, 3rd Duke of (1742) : his opposition to Walpole	216
<i>Alberta</i> , the Queen's yacht, refer- ence	352	John, 5th Duke, reference	463
Alexandra, Queen : anecdote respecting	549	George Douglas Campbell, 8th Duke, his opposition to Gladstone on the Home Rule question 214, 215	
Reference	450	References 146, 154	
Alfonso XIII., King of Spain, reference	83	John Douglas Sutherland, 9th Duke (Marquis of Lorne), emolument as Governor of Windsor Castle	163
Allan, Sir William, member for Gateshead	430		
Allen, W., member for New- castle-under-Lyme	430		
Allerton, W. L. Jackson, 1st			

- Armitstead, George 220, 221
- Ashbourne, Edward Gibson, 1st Lord :
 a Lord of Appeal204
 anecdote respecting 373, 374
- Ashburton, Francis D. E. Baring, 5th Lord, reference94
- Ashley, Cropley. *See* Shaftesbury, 6th Earl
- Ashley, Lord. *See* Shaftesbury, 7th Earl
- Ashley, Hon. Evelyn, the cause of an "*oratorical gem*"283
- Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis :
Bellowing contumely52
Crushed again ...96, 97
 how regarded by the House152
 more successful in electioneering174
Wrong Again175
 omitted in Lord Salisbury's third administration 226-228
A Russian Bath in the House of Commons286
The Humble Function of the Football227
 References 264, 307, 331, 395, 417
- Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. H. :
 intends to be Prime Minister120
obiter dicta concerning him 121-122
 his revision of Justice Day's sentences353
 References 74, 386, 423
- Astley, Sir John37
- Atterbury, Francis, Bishop of Rochester ...47, 48
- Austin, Alfred (Poet Laureate), reference448
- Austria, Francis I., Emperor of93
- Avebury, John Lubbock, 1st Lord, reference226
- Ayrton, A. S., his unpopularity102
- Bacon, Francis, Lord Verulam, references ...46, 68
- Bacon, Sir Nicholas, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Queen Elizabeth46
- Balfour :
 Rt. Hon. Arthur :
Awfully cold51
Substance and shadow108
The Race for the Leadership131
 his indifference to newspapers 169, 170
 precise memory277
 his view of a nominal supporter299
 oratorical gestures321
- Balfour : (Cont.) :
 Rt. Hon. Arthur : (Cont.) :
Do you know him ?326
Writing a letter to the Queen400
The brothers Balfour416
An eloquent gesture of despair439
Lobby sprinting441
Is that Shaw-Lefevre ?501
 indifference to titles531
 references 7, 25, 29, 57, 109, 110, 128-134, 156, 161, 166, 168, 214, 263, 313, 317, 335, 359, 360, 415, 418, 420, 421, 423, 436, 440, 444, 496, 502, 519, 520, 530
- Sir George, K.C.B. 13, 17
- Rt. Hon. Gerald W. :
 his message received with *constirpation*34
 resemblance to his brother110
The Chief Secretary's fragile frame280
The brothers Balfour416
 references 85, 415
- General Nisbet, member for Arundel (1796)461
- Balloting290
Making a Pudding291
- Baptism by immersion272
- Barings, the two. *See* Ashburton and Northbrook
- Barnaby Rudge*, alluded to ...87, 88
- Barrie, J. M.402
- Barrington, Sir W. Hartington, 7th Viscount, sometime Vice-Chamberlain, made a Peer by Lord Beaconsfield 264, 265, 337
- Bartlett, Ashmead. *See* Ashmead-Bartlett
- Bartley, G. C. T. 335, 343, 412, 413, 501
- Barttelot, Sir Walter G. :
A Horrible Discovery ...40, 41
 Reference 450
- Battenberg, Princess Henry of (H. R. H. Princess Beatrice), her presence of mind82
- Beach, W. W. B. 148, 149, 155
- Beaconsfield, Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of :
In the Place of Disraeli133
Placing a Coronet on his Brow145
 his pension262
The Lost Eye-Glass 264, 265
 effects of his withdrawal from the House 336, 337
 his dilemma, *Wound up and Timed* 458, 459

Beaconsfield, Benjamin Disraeli,
Earl of: (*Cont.*):
his oratorical efforts, *Rehears-
ing*475
References 13, 38, 49, 53,
76, 80, 98, 99, 105, 119, 134, 144,
147, 148, 198, 199, 226, 250, 278,
294, 311, 312, 319, 320, 325, 326,
334, 348, 422, 434, 444, 454, 461,
503, 528, 531, 534
Beatrice, Princess. *See* Batten-
berg
Beaufoy, M. H.58
Becket, Thomas à35
Bedchamber women question,
the249
Bedford, 5th Duke of, reference463
Beefeater, *temp.* Henry VIII.222
Belgians, King of the, reference444
Bellingham, John, the murderer
of Mr. Spencer Perceval,
references 409, 463
Benedetti Treaty, the, reference185
Bentinck :
Cavendish, "Big Ben" and
"Little Ben"462
William Henry Cavendish,
afterwards 4th Duke of
Portland, reference462
Beresford, Lord Charles :
anecdote—*I sha'n't sign the
Estimates*31
risks a new hat ...96, 97
one of the *Pigtail Party*336
Reference209
Berkeley, Hon. G. C. G. F.,
member for West Gloucester
(1832), reference528
Bernal, R. (1836), afterwards R.
Bernal Osborne, reference523
Betham-Edwards, M.170
Biddulph, M.156
Biggar, J. G. :
his four hours' speech480
References 37, 39, 40,
56, 196, 197, 318, 465, 490
Billeting, the charges of licensed
victuallers484
Billingsley, *temp.* Charles II.495
Bills, bringing in293
Birmingham, Charles Gore,
Bishop of, his story of the
dying pickpocket 308, 309
Birrell, Augustine, Q.C. :
his "good things"26
Obiter Dicta27
Black Rod, *Pursued by the
Treasury*343
References 223, 341-344, 367, 510

Boehm, Joseph Edgar :
observes the effect of Mr.
Gladstone's eye 383, 384
Reference8
Bona-fide traveller, the432
Boots, the, of a sleepy member42
Borthwick, Algernon. *See* Glen-
esk, Lord
Bouverie, Edward, an early
member462
Bowles :
Rear-Admiral, member in
1845173
Thomas Gibson :
his nautical dress91
*Cap'en Tommy Bowles of the
Horse Marines*173
His Corner Seat302
Mr. Gedge in Possession303
Toujours Gedge304
renounces journalism404
one of the *Raiders*412
References 226, 227, 335,
343, 413
Boys, C. V., of the Electric
Telegraph Company 442, 443
Brabourne, Edward Knatchbull-
Hugessen, 1st Lord, refer-
ence58
Bradlaugh, Charles, references 54, 196,
334, 501
Brand :
Sir H. *See* Hampden,
Viscount
President, Orange Free State436
Bright, Rt. Hon. John :
his hats80
his letter on the Home Rule
question 190-193
his carelessness with regard to
health 211, 212
Chamberlain antagonistic to542
References 56, 155, 167, 334,
336, 370, 473, 474, 504, 505
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. W. St. J. F.,
Secretary for War :
*Reading Lord Kitchener's De-
spatch*507
Cordite Conspiracy, applying
the torch548
References 438, 464
Brodrick, William, Secretary to
East India Board, *temp.*
George III.463
Brotherton, Joseph, member for
Salford (1836)524
Brougham, Henry, Lord :
Lord Chancellor, 1830 :
Baron for the port of Winchelsea....467

- Brougham, Henry, Lord : (*Cont.*) :
as a Baron of the Cinque Ports469
 disposal of his share of the
 Coronation Canopy472
 Reference467
 Brown, A. H.156
 Browne :
 Hablott K., portraits after 248, 249
 John, Clerk of the Parliament,
 1683, reference367
 Brunner, Sir John, Bart. :
 his idea at the outbreak of the
 Hispano-American War205
 No thanks, I don't want any
 Ironclads to-day206
 Buckingham, George Villiers,
 Duke of, reference35
Bulls488
 Bungay, a malefactor, *temp.*
 Charles II.496
 Burdett, Sir Francis, reference94
 Burdett-Coutts, W. L. A. B.,
 references 417, 501
 Burgh, Hubert de, reference35
 Burke, Edmund :
 his interview with Arthur
 Young170
 described by a German
 traveller241
 References 17, 238, 473, 474
 Burnand, Sir Francis :
 entertains Mr. Gladstone at a
 Punch dinner209
 Reference57
 Burt, Thomas :
 allusion to his maiden speech63
 References 156, 284, 450, 451
 Buxton :
 Robert John, a member in
 1796462
 Sir Thomas Fowell, Bart.,
 figures in Hayter's picture
 of the Parliament of 183394
 Cabinet Councils48
 Cabinet Council of two, in bed50
 Cadogan, George Henry, 5th
 Earl, reference146
 Caine, W. S., *Keeping Mr.*
 Bright advised 191-193
 Caldwell, James :
 a "Platitudiniser" 103, 104
 An Amendment by Mr. Cald-
 well421
 enjoys himself496
 Mr. Caldwell at Work497
 References 33, 201, 331, 361, 422
 Caledon, E. J. D., 5th Earl, his
 connection with *Old Sarum*.....395
 Callias51
 Canning, George :
 quoted 283, 522
 References 145, 234, 284, 394, 463
 Cambridge, Duke of, reference356
 Cameron, Sir Charles, reference156
 Campbell :
 Colonel, his *Letters from Camp*
 during the Siege of Sebas-
 topol, quoted339
 Rt. Hon. J. A., member for
 Glasgow and Aberdeen
 Universities, reference417
 Lord John Douglas, after-
 wards 7th Duke of Argyll,
 reference463
 Sir George :
 Lieut.-Governor of Bengal13
 What a fearful Creature15
 References 14, 16, 17
 Campbell-Bannerman :
 Rt. Hon. Sir Henry118
 The only Safe Place312
 A Difficult Mount313
 References 119, 122, 156,
 356, 410, 417, 496
 Canterbury, Archbishop of. *See*
 Howley
 Caroline, Queen, references to
 her trial 467, 469
 Carlisle, Frederick, 5th Earl,
 reference371
 Carlyle, Thomas, Gladstone's
 opinion of his *Cromwell*360
 Carnarvon, H. H. M. Herbert,
 4th Earl, Colonial Secre-
 tary ...74-78
 Reference503
 Catching the Speaker's eye19
 Catholic University in Dublin
 Bill, reference370
 Cattermole, George, drawing by88
 Cavagnari, Sir Louis, reference379
 Cavendish :
 Lord Frederick, his blood-
 stained coat62
 Lord George Henry, brother
 to the 7th Duke of Devon-
 shire, reference462
 Cecil :
 Evelyn, nephew to Lord Hugh
 Cecil416
 Lord Hugh :
 resemblance to his cousin109
 References 408, 416, 417, 431
 Lord Robert. *See* Salisbury,
 Marquis of
 Sir Robert, High Treasurer to
 Queen Elizabeth 401, 402, 428

Central News Agency, reference442
 Cetewayo, reference to his
 capture378
 Chacevelin, Monsieur330
 Chairman of Committees498
 Challemel - Lacour, Monsieur,
 reference289
 Chamberlain :
 Rt. Hon. J. Austen, as
 Financial Secretary499
 Rt. Hon. Joseph :
 In the place of Disraeli133
 Bracing him up167
 Joseph addressing his brethren189
 Who knew not Jemmy226
 Mr. Chamberlain takes a note277
 Do you know him ?326
 References 93, 128-130,
 134, 156, 166, 168, 182-190, 192,
 193, 215, 218-220, 225, 227, 298,
 415, 436, 444, 450, 452-454, 482,
 519, 520, 532, 541, 542
 Chancellor of the Exchequer.
 See Hicks-Beach, Sir M.,
 and Ritchie, C. T.
 his robes 527, 528
 Channel Tunnel Bill, reference452
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry :
 On a back bench407
 Reference156
 Charles :
 I. King :
 a love-letter 364, 365
 arrest of the Bishops510
 the five members511
 Just popping in—I hope I don't intrude512
 Disapproval512
 References 68, 270, 409,
 512, 513, 516
 Charles :
 II., King :
 a mace presented to Jamaica
 by271
 romance of the Prayer-Book 366, 367
 frequently sat in House of
 Lords 476, 477
 news-letters of the period495
 Reference516
 Chiffner, Henry, member for
 Minehead, 1762 :
 References 393, 394
 Childers, Rt. Hon. H. C. E.,
 references 435-439, 460
 Christian, Prince. *See* Schleswig
 Holstein
 Church, Professor, reference44

Churchill :
 Lord Randolph :
 sketch of portrait after E. A.
 Ward84
 his bust201
 his memoirs340
 the Fourth Party411
 References 40, 83, 95, 118,
 120, 129, 131, 132, 166, 232, 284,
 341, 342, 369, 384, 411, 425, 446,
 447, 452, 453, 462, 528
 Winston, L. S. : 85 (n.), 341 (n.),
 406, 425, 426
 Cinque Ports :
 The Bold Barons and the Canopy470
 the Barons' march on London 467-472
 Civil List :
 William the Fourth's426
 side lights on the447
 committee of 1889449
 Clarence, Duke of, costs of his
 funeral448
 Clarendon, Lord, *History of the Rebellion* quoted364
 Clark :
 Dr., reference430
 Sir Andrew, reference211
 Clarke, Sir Edward, reference389
 Clergyman, a, becomes an
 M.P.205
 Clerk of the Parliament :
 John Browne (1683)367
 References 342-344, 392
 Clinton, Lord Edward Pelham339
 Cliveden, the birthplace of the
 Irish Church Bill154
 Cobbett, William, appears in
 Hayter's picture of 183394
 Cobden :
 Richard, references 228, 529
 Club, incident at a dinner of
 the229
 Cockburn, Alexander of Langton,
 Heritable Usher of Scotland245
 Coercion Bills, reference56
 Cohen, Arthur, reference267
 Coleridge :
 Lord Chief Justice30
 Sir Frank Lockwood's portraits
 of 139, 140
 References ...31, 58
 Coleridge, Bernard, 2nd Lord,
 reference58
 Colley, Sir George 435, 436
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse :
 Three Acres and a Cow170

556 LATER PEEPS AT PARLIAMENT

Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse : (Cont.) :

Leads the Attack182

References 128, 183, 220,
226, 231, 232

Colonial Grievance, a156

Columb, Rt. Hon. Sir John,
reference163

Compton, Earl. *See* North-
ampton, Marquis of

Condor, the, reference96

Coningsby, reference145

Connelly, Thomas, reference37

Conybeare, C. A. V. 15, 202

Corbett, W. J., his pension163

Cork and Orrery, R. E. St.
Lawrence, 9th Earl 489-491

Corner seat, the siege of the303

Cornwall :

Duke of. *See* Wales, Prince of

Mr., referred to by Hatsell255

Coronation Honours530

Corry, Sir James450

Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H. :

Mr. Courtney's Back up21

References 22, 47, 226,
303, 404, 498

Coventry, William, member in
1675255

Cowen, Joseph :

A Parliamentary Benefactor288

*The Hermit of Blaydon-on-
Tyne*347

A Shadow of the Past348

The Conspirators of Europe349

quoted 350-352

References 287, 346, 329

Cowper, 7th Earl, reference146

Cranborne, Lord. *See* Salis-
bury, 4th Marquis

Cromwell, Oliver :

The Cromwell Statue 359, 360

References 270, 271, 494, 536

Cross :

Richard A., Viscount :

Got no Work to Do414

A Pensioner261

Reference262

Sir Robert, *temp.* Elizabeth428

Cross-benches, the158

Crown Private Estates Act,
reference479

Crypts and vaults of the Houses
of Parliament, searching the..... 222

Currie, Sir Donald356

Curzon of Kedleston :

George N. 1st Lord :

his career 129, 130

Viceroy of India278

Reference227

Curzon :

Robert, *temp.* George III.462

Viscount. *See* Howe, Earl

Cust, Henry J. C., former Editor

Pall Mall Gazette, reference.....406

Czar. *See* Russia, Emperor of

Daily News, The, its attitude on
the Home Rule question 216,

217, 220

Daily Sittings, the length of317

Daily Telegraph, The, on *branders*

in the House138

Dalrymple, Sir Charles, reference.....417

Dalziel, J. H. :

says things406

References 405, 430

Damer :

Dawson, reference463

Lionel, an old member of the

House462

David Copperfield, reference381

Davies, David, reference37

Davey of Fernhurst, Lord, a

Lord of Appeal204

Davitt, Michael :

his prison life ...64, 65

Reference280

Day, Sir J. C. Justice, *Dies Ira*.....353

Dear Lady Disdain, reference404

Death Duties Budget, reference251

Deceased Wife's Sister Bill :

The Deceased Wife's Sister256

References 459, 460

Delahunty, Mr.37

Demagogues in the House283

Democracy and Liberty, by

Lecky, quoted382

Denison, Rt. Hon. J. E., after-

wards Viscount Ossington,

Speaker, references 94, 256,

325, 346

Denman, Thomas, 2nd Lord :

jealous of his privileges204

takes charge of Women's

Suffrage Bill298

Lay low and said nuffin299

Depew, Chauncey, *Post-prandial*

humour 373, 374

Derby :

14th Earl :

notices Gladstone's maiden

speech 98, 236, 237

References 42, 99, 146,

148, 279, 294

15th Earl 503, 505

16th Earl, *The Head of the*

Army and Chief of the Fleet.....165

Derby Day, reference48

- Devonshire :
- 5th Duke :
- Reference462
- 8th Duke :
- With hat tilted over*
- brow*75
- Strolling in late*167
- Bracing him up*167
- References 59, 128, 146, 166, 168,
182, 183, 190, 192, 249, 250,
450, 504
- Duchess of, wife of 5th Duke,
obliged to retire from the
Ladies Gallery254
- Duchess of, wife of 8th Duke,
her fancy dress ball527
- De Worms, Rt. Hon. Baron H. :
- A Baron of High Degree* 125, 126
- Shelved with a Peerage* 225, 226
- Diary of the Gladstone Parlia-
ment*, quoted131
- Dickens, Charles :
- size of his hat80
- References ...87, 89
- Dictionary of National Bio-
graphy*, reference514
- Digby, Lord, *temp.* Charles I.,
reference510
- Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir C. W.,
references 289, 303,
411, 429, 430
- Dillon, John :
- gives the lie direct to Mr.
Chamberlain519
- Mr. Dillon on the Globe*539
- References 64, 259
- Dillwyn, L. L., his claim to the
corner seat 304-306
- Diplomatic Gallery, references 157, 158
- Disraeli, Rt. Hon. Benjamin.
See Beaconsfield
- Dissentient Liberals*, origin of
the phrase217
- Divisions :
- The Rush from the Lobby*2
- Division*3
- Anguished Impotence*96
- Dod*, a prehistoric 394, 395
- Dod's grandfather*461
- Dodson, J. G., afterwards Lord
Monk Bretton, reference346
- Doogan, P. C., his pension 163
- Door-keepers in the Commons99
- Where's my Umbrella?*101
- Doub*, take care of, origin of
phrase 314, 315
- Dowbiggin, Mr., reference315
- Downing, Mr. M'Carthy, refer-
ence37
- Doyle :
- Sir Conan, his candidature 402, 403
- Richard, *Dicky Doyle*, quoted5, 6
- Drummond :
- Mr., an early member of
Parliament6
- Drummond-Wolff, Sir Henry.
See Wolff, Sir H. D.
- Dublin, the terror caused by the
assassination of Lord Fred.
Cavendish62
- Ducal duplicity, a story of47
- Dudley, W. H. Ward, 2nd Earl,
reference164
- Duff, Rt. Hon. Sir M. E. Grant,
his story of *the Admiral's*
Rum354
- Dufferin, 1st Marquis, reference329
- Du Maurier, George, his meeting
with Gladstone at a *Punch*
dinner 209, 210
- Dundas, Henry, afterwards Vis-
count Melville :
- Reference17
- his salary as Secretary for
War and President of India
Board464
- Dundee Advertiser, The*, reference.....405
- Dyce, William, R.A., reference43
- Dyer :
- George, friend of Charles
Lamb, his absence of
mind272
- Sir T. Thistleton, reference363
- Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart :
- Conservative Whip5
- finds the lost writ145
- his *bull*306
- References 156, 226, 227, 269
- Dynamos, Sir F. Lockwood on543
- Early Letters to his Sister*, by
Disraeli, alluded to145
- East India Company, renewal of
charter70
- Edinburgh Review*, reference94
- Edmonstone, Sir W., Bart., C. B. :
- The Admiral*, his peculiarities.....38
- Drawing the Admiral*, process
described39
- Education Bill, reference61
- Education, Committee of Council
on381
- Edward :
- I., King, charter relating to
the Cinque Ports467
- The First of Scotland, question
of the title421
- III., King, reference65

Edward : (*Cont.*) :

VI., King, his Book of Common Prayer	.....367
VII., King :	
Size of his hat	.....80
To see the King in his golden crown	.....418
An Amendment by Mr. Caldwell	.....421
A popular figure — His Majesty John Bull	.....444
a trained man of business	.....445
his kindly tact	446, 447
the Duchies	.....449
the King and Parliament	476, 477
the King's speech	.....522
Coronation honours	530, 531
accession	.....537
References	283, 419, 427, 448, 450-452, 467, 514, 515, 549
Edwards :	
General, his pension	162
Sir Henry :	
an old style member	.....76
His statue	.....77
On a trial trip	.....78
his death	.....79
Eighty Club, reference	.....220
Elcho, Lord, his double dealing with Derby Day	.....48
Eldon, John Scott, 1st Earl, Lord Chancellor, <i>temp.</i> George III.	.....394
Eleanor, wife of Edward I., crosses referred to	.....221
Eleanor, wife of Henry III., reference	.....467
Election fight, a fearsome	.....178
Electric bells and their disadvantages, a night alarm	.....22
Electric Telegraph Company, its monopoly	441, 442
<i>Elfin</i> , The, Queen's yacht, reference	.....352
Elizabeth, Queen :	
her opening of Parliament	.....28
her correspondence with Sir Robert Cecil	400-402
References	46, 47, 231, 428, 521
Elliott, Hon. Arthur Ralph, reference	.....405
Ellis :	
General Sir Arthur, proposed reduction of salary	341, 342
T. E. :	
Chief Liberal <i>Whip</i>	.....269
his good nature and modesty	274, 275
Reference	.....301

Elphinstone, Sir John	.....37
Empress of India Bill, reference	.....347
<i>England in the Eighteenth Century</i> , reference	.....27
<i>Eothen</i> , by A. W. Kinglake, reference	.....308
Erskine :	
Thomas, Lord Chancellor, 1806, reference	.....17
H. D., reference	.....419
Essex, Robert D., 3rd Earl	.....28
Eugénie, Empress, wife of Napoleon III.	.....364
Evans :	
General Sir De Lacy, expounds the riddle of <i>Dowb</i>	314, 315
Samuel T.	412, 430
Eversley, Charles Shaw-Lefevre, Viscount :	
<i>Is that Shaw-Lefevre ?</i>	.....501
the last Speaker using the privilege of making a speech at the prorogation	.....515
References	58, 263 (n.), 302
Explosions at Whitehall and in the Crypt, their effect	.....87
Eyre, Edward John, Governor of Jamaica, reference to the proceedings against	143, 144
Fairfax, General Sir Thomas, 1643	.....364
Family circles in the Commons	.....416
<i>A Family Group</i>	.....416
Fardell, Sir Thomas G., his pension	.....163
<i>Father of the House</i> , The	.....148
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir James : brother to Sir Charles Dalrymple	.....417
References	226, 227
Field, W., his prime <i>bull</i>	.....521
Finch Hatton, Mr. See Winchelsea, Earl	
Finigan, J. L.	.....40
Fisher, W. Hayes, reference	.....298
Fisheries (Oysters, Crabs, and Lobsters) Act, Mr. Christopher Sykes and the	257, 446
Fitzmaurice, Lord E. G. P., reference	.....368
Fitzwilliam, G. W., 4th Earl	.....338
Fitz-wygram, Lieut.-Gen. Sir F. W. J., his retired pay	.....162
Five members, the	.....511
Flavin, M. J., <i>Carrying Mr. Flavin out</i>	481, 482
Fleecing the Chosen of the Flock	.....456
<i>The Bishop's Bill</i>	.....456

- Fleecing the Chosen of the flock: (*Cont.*):
Approaching the Dean and Chapter458
- Fletcher, Sir Henry, an early member of the House462
- Foljambe, Mr.58
- Folkestone, Lord. *See* Radnor, Earl of
- Food and Drugs Bill, reference307
- Forbes, J. S., reference454
- Foreign difficulties in spelling English names12
- Forgotten Sentries90
- Forster :
 Arnold, his appointment as Secretary to the Admiralty413
 Sir Charles149
 Rt. Hon. W. E. :
 his remark concerning Mr. Arch63
 References 61, 62, 287, 504-506
- Forwood, Sir W.227
- Fourth Party, The*411
- Fowle, William, solicitor to Barons of the Cinque Ports, references 467, 472
- Fowler :
 Miss Ellen Thorneycroft, quoted196
 Rt. Hon. Sir Henry :
 his career119
 Sir Henry Fowler's Charge 252, 253
- Fox, Charles James :
 sketch from an old portrait241
 References 238, 253, 254, 394, 463
- French House of Commons, the 386
- From Behind the Speaker's Chair*, story from309
- From the Cross Benches*, the King's appreciation of 446, 447
 Reference218
- Gardner, Herbert C., afterwards Lord Burghclere302
- Garter :
 King at Arms, references ...68, 70
 Knights of the146
- Gaskell, C. G. Milnes, reference..... 58
- Gedge, Sydney :
 his plan32
 in possession of *Cap'en Tommy Bowles' Pitch*303
Toujours Gedge304
 his views on the question of the Lord Chancellor335
- George :
 I., King, references 47, 233
- George : (*Cont.*):
 III., King :
 The Lord Chancellor as George III.527
 References 24, 393, 394, 409, 462
- IV., King :
 present as Prince of Wales at the trial of Warren Hastings70
 Barons of the Cinque Ports at his coronation467
 The Bold Barons and the Canopy 470, 471
 Reference522
- Giffard, Sir Hardinge. *See* Halsbury, Lord
- Gilbert, W. S., references 78, 426
- Gil Blas*, its difficulty in spelling English names12
- Gladstone :
 Rt. Hon. Herbert :
 the Cromwell Statue 359, 360
 opposed to the removal of the grille in Ladies' Gallery529
 References ...28, 59
- Rt. Hon. W. E. :
 incident of his trip on the *Tantallon Castle*12
 public interest in29
 the yellow window blind49
 last years in the Commons52
 antagonistic demonstrations in the House53
 He steadfastly regarded the yelling Mob54
 Dexterously balancing the Hat55
 With courteous Gesture56
 an Eton dinner57
 A grand old Eton Boy59
 his hat80
 in Peel's parliament94
 his maiden speech 98, 236
 Nolo Coronari146
 his memoirs147
- Sir G. O. Morgan's port-manteau153
- influence of Home Rule question on the Liberal party 181-193
- retirement from the Premiership194
- A glowing Glance*195
- Walking out for the last time*207
- He took a great interest in Punch*208
- An attractive Listener*209

Gladstone : (Cont.) :

Rt. Hon. W. E. (Cont.) :

his appreciation of Artists	.....210
gives advice to John Bright	.....211
<i>A little friendly Advice</i>	.....212
<i>What! not remember it?</i>	.....213
not indifferent to news-papers	.....214
political situation paralleled in Walpole's second administration	.....215
attitude of the <i>Daily News</i>	.....216
<i>Writing a post card</i>	.....217
facsimile of one of his post-cards	.....219
his holiday task	.....220
<i>At a four-mile-an-hour pace</i>	.....233
doctoring a tally	.....234
impresses the House in 1833	.....236
<i>An early appearance in the Parliamentary ring</i>	.....237
his oratorical gestures	.....320
his reception of the news of the defeat of the Rosebery Government	.....356
would have voted for the Cromwell statue	... ..360
an early portrait and a forecaste	.....370
his eyes, <i>A Flasking Eye</i>	.....382
<i>Mr. Lecky struck by a Phenomenon</i>	.....383
his five hours' speech	.....393
a supporter of the Channel Tunnel scheme	.....452
speeches mostly extemporaneous	.....476
added to the Statutes <i>The Crown Private Estates Act</i>	.....479
Harcourt's advice to his biographer	.....485
his plan for adding a third Secretary to the Treasury staff	.....499
effect of his absence in the early stage of the Bradlaugh difficulty	.....501
References	7, 8, 39-41, 46, 60, 61, 74, 75, 83, 100, 112, 131, 115-117, 119-124, 133, 145, 149, 151, 152, 154, 166, 167, 196, 201, 218, 225, 228, 231, 232, 238, 248, 250, 251, 260-262, 277-279, 284, 290, 298, 301, 312, 317, 318, 325, 328, 334-338, 348, 359, 370, 371, 373, 376, 385, 389, 390, 406, 408, 409, 421, 424, 444, 450, 451-454, 474, 492, 516, 528, 531, 544, 547

Gladstone : (Cont.) :

Mrs., her care and watchfulness	.....233
Glenesk, Algernon Borthwick, Lord, the early days of the Primrose League	.....385
<i>Globe</i> , the, its splendid advertisement	.....539
Goethe, J. W., reference	.....382
Goldsworthy, Maj.-Gen. W. T., his pension	.....162
Gordon :	
Lady Dufr, Doyle sends her a portrait of Sir Robert Peel	.....5
Lord George, Riots, reference	.....87
Gore, Canon. See Birmingham, Bishop of	
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E. :	
<i>Automatic Gestures—II.</i>	.....322
<i>I want to make your flesh creep</i>	.....380
<i>The Lay of the Last V.-P.</i>	.....381
References	132, 382, 384, 450
Gortchakoff, Prince, reference	.....505
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J., Lord :	
motion to reduce his salary	.....33
<i>The Unexpected Footprint</i>	128, 129
his literary work	169
his views on public audiences	175, 176
<i>The Whigs take Fright</i>	181, 182
oratorical gestures	.....321
References	132, 166, 342, 450, 528
Gosset, F. R., reference	.....493
Gourley, Colonel Sir E., member in 1868	155, 156
Graham, Sir James R. G., Bart., Home Secretary, 1841-6, references	...6, 94
Grant, James, quoted	.....371
Granville, Granville Geo., 2nd Earl :	
present at the <i>Punch</i> dinner	.....209
rallied by Gladstone on his memory	.....213
Warden of the Cinque Ports	328-330
his difficulty with Lord Beaconsfield	.....459
References	49, 93, 250, 463
Gravelot, Hubert, French artist (1699-1773), his picture of the House in the National Portrait Gallery	.....91
Great Seal, the, <i>The real Great Seal</i>	.....486
Greene :	
H. D., member for Shrewsbury, reference	.....461
Edward, member in 1874	.....461

- Gregory, Rt. Hon. William,
Under Secretary for Ireland
(1813-35), his *Letter Box*283
- Grenville, W. W. Lord, Foreign
Secretary, 1789 - 1801,
Speaker, his salary464
- Grey :
Sir Edward, Bart. :
his qualities121
an angler122
Reference129
Charles, Lord Howick, 2nd
Earl :
his manner of addressing
the Queen420
References 99, 121, 280
Grey's Debates, reference255
Grosvenor, Lord Richard. *See*
Stalbridge, Lord
- Grote, George, the historian, an
early member94
- Gully :
John, sometime prizefighter,
member for Pontefract,
1832-3794
Rt. Hon. W. C. :
Speaker, his repression of
ambiguous questions288
when elected, *a dark horse*326
Sub-editing questions, *The*
Speaker riding on the
Whirlwind378
his pronunciation of *Dalsiel*.....406
The Mace accompanying the
Speaker420
Mr. Speaker takes the oath537
References 141, 200, 514, 515
See also Speaker
Mrs., reference201
- Gunpowder Plot :
The search for Guy Fawkes,
A Bee-feater, temp. Henry
VIII. 222
Reference24
- Gurney, Sir Richard, Lord
Mayor of London 1642,
assaulted by citizen's wives513
- Guy Fawkes :
the search for 222-224
Reference89
- Gwynne, Nell :
a topic in Mostyn's seventeenth
century News-Letters392
extracts relating to, from
Newidgate's M.S. News-
Letters495
- Haines, H., his old time *History*
of Prime Ministers35
- Hair-curled Oratory33
- Haldane, Rt. Hon. R. B., *The*
calm and philosophical
sketch by the late Sir Frank
Lockwood139
- Halsbury, Hardinge Stanley,
Giffard, 1st Earl: Lord
Chancellor :
a Cabinet of two, *Cold,*
isn't it, Arthur? ...50, 51
his career142
defence of Governor Eyre, *Is*
this Justice?143
a dilemma, *The lost Writ*144
his graceful performances157
Popping on and off the Wool-
sack158
at Prayer time101
The Lord Chancellor quietly
drops in203
Catching a Big Fish on the top
of a Tree306
presides at a tea-table on the
Terrace362
The Lord Chancellor wielding
the Tea-pot363
The Order of Precedence425
The real Great Seal486
a catastrophe averted, *The*
Lord Chancellor has a
Narrow Escape 515, 516
his fancy dress costume, *The*
Lord Chancellor as George
III.527
References 204, 240, 270, 335,
341, 352, 432, 460
- Halsey, Rt. Hon. T. F., mem-
ber in 1874156
- Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord
George, Secretary of State
for India :
his oratorical gestures322
References 156, 497, 498
- Hampden, H. R. Brand, 1st
Viscount: Speaker :
receives a mysterious box177
at one time chief Liberal
Whip326
References 269, 325, 460, 544
- Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. W. :
A Keen Scent for Jobs246
the salary of the Serjeant-at-
Arms341
Takes the Business in hand 343, 344
one of the *Raiders*412
References 335, 413, 415
- Hansard :
quoted 237, 254
References 255, 515

- Harcourt family :
 Archives of the525
 Sir Simon, Lord Keeper to
 Queen Anne 525-527
 Simpkin, son of the foregoing 525, 526
 Simon, member of the House
 in the early days of the
 century463
 Rt. Hon. Sir William Vernon :
 member of the South Africa
 Committee 69, 70
Enter the Committee71
 political career111
A Towering Impatience,
One of the Kindest of Men.....112
A Way of Sitting upon
People113
 a voluminous note-taker277
Sir W. Harcourt's Notes473
 his retirement, *In the Corner*.....301
Automatic Gestures—I.321
 his brother416
 his advice to John Morley
 respecting Gladstone's
 Biography485
 goes as his ancestor to the
 Duchess of Devonshire's
 Ball, *Lord Keeper in the*
Time of Queen Anne527
 refusal of honours, *Nolo*
Coronetari 530, 531
 References 38, 86, 105, 115,
 116, 118-120, 156, 251, 312,
 429, 444, 474, 475, 487, 488,
 526, 548
 Colonel E. W., reference ...416
- Hardie, J. Keir :
 appears in the House, *Enter*
Mr. Keir Hardie284
 unfulfilled expectations, *Exit*
Mr. Keir Hardie285
- Hardwicke :
 Lady, wife of the Lord Chan-
 cellor, her collection of
 purses487
 6th Earl, his connection with
 stockbroking415
 Harewood, 1st Earl of, reference463
 Harley, Edward, afterwards and
 Earl of Oxford, reference525
 Harmsworth, Leicester, refer-
 ence406
 Harrington, T. C.519
 Harris, Lord, reference157
 Hartington, Lord. *See Devon-*
shire, Duke of
 Hastings, Warren, trial of,
 parallelisms in the trials of
 Rhodes and Parnell 67-74
- Hats and Heads79
 Hatsell, John, jurist, quoted254
 Hatton, Sir Christopher, Lord
 Chancellor to Queen Eliza-
 beth, reference231
 Havelock-Allan, Sir Henry, his
 pay and pension162
 Hay, Sir John, his story about
 ladies in the House 255, 256
 Hayter :
 Sir Arthur58
 Sir George, his view of the
 House in 183394
 Hayward, Abraham, Q.C., re-
 ference340
 Healy :
 Maurice, reference417
 Timothy, *An uncomfortable*
position76
 References 40, 41, 417, 534
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H., Ser-
 jeant-at-Law, his pension163
 Hendren, Bishop6
 Henley, A. H., 3rd Lord, some-
 time member for North-
 ampton, references 255, 256
 Henrietta Maria, Queen, her
 love-letters 364, 365
 Henry :
 III., King, reference 467
 IV. of France, King, a
 mission to, *Lord Salisbury*
and Henry IV. of France 401, 402
 Herbert, John Rogers, R.A.,
 references 43, 44
 Heritable Usher of Scotland, his
 salary 245-247
 Hermon, Hodge, Sir R. T.,
 Bart., his military appearance....164
 Herschell, Farrer : 1st Lord :
 his hat56
 his maiden speech265
 in the Lords, *Lord Herschell*
as Lord Chancellor266
 a "Passover"267
 References 188, 204, 301
 Hibbert, Rt. Hon. Sir John T.,
 sometime Financial Sec. to
 the Treasury302
 Hickel, Karl Anton, his painting
 in the National Portrait
 Gallery92
 Hicks-Beach :
 Rt. Hon. Sir Michael :
 an *Old Boy* 104, 105
Upright and stiff-backed129
 his rapid advancement 415
 References 133, 156, 197
 Michael, *temp.* George III. 462

- Hill, Rt. Hon. A. Staveley :
his emoluments163
Reference156
Hippias of Elis, reference51
Hippocrates, reference51
History repeating itself339
History of our own Times on
Gladstone's maiden speech236
Hoare, Sir Samuel, Bart449
Hobhouse :
Benjamin, member *temp.*
George III.462
Sir John Cam, afterwards
Lord Broughton94
Arthur, 1st Lord204
Hogan, J. F., takes up the
Colonial grievance157
Holden, Sir Isaac, Bart. :
his career122
no talker but a walker123
diet124
his death125
Home Rule Bill, references 52, 53, 123,
181-192, 195, 214, 251, 276
Homer, references 210, 220
Hope, Anthony, his candida-
ture 402, 403
Horner, F. W., the Ladies
Gallery question528
Horsley, Mr., Inspector :
Brawler, Beware! Sketch by
the late Sir F. Lockwood138
portrait224
Horsley, J. C., R.A., references ...43, 44
Horsman, George, reference227
House of Commons :
air and ventilation296
Terrace 176, 360-363, 413, 414, 541
House of Lords, amenities in516
Household Franchise Bill, refer-
ence63
Howarth, Sir Henry H., refer-
ence501
Howe, R. G. Penn Curzon, 4th
Earl, reference340
Howick, Lord. *See* Grey, and
Earl.
Howley, William, Archbishop of
Canterbury, his early morn-
ing visit to the Queen ...81, 82
Hunsdon, Lord, *temp.* Charles
II.495
Hurst, R. H., member for Hors-
ham, 1837338
Iddesleigh, Stafford Northcote,
1st Earl 118, 119, 130, 197,
334, 450, 504, 505
Illingworth, A., reference 450
Indian Cotton Duties 119, 251
Ingram-Winnington, Bishop of
London, *The Bishop's Bill*,
Dear me! London's a dread-
fully expensive place456
Irish Church Disestablishment
Bill :
its birthplace154
References 98, 151, 154, 278, 283
Irish :
Land Bill, the first 151, 283
Local Government Bill 259
University Bill228
Ironclad, a private, *No thanks*,
I don't want any Ironclads
to-day205
Jackson, W. L. *See* Allerton,
1st Lord
James I., King, references 508-510, 521
James II., King :
his great seal cast into the
Thames487
References 392, 477
James of Hereford, Lord :
Sir Henry James going up to
the Lords59
Sir Henry James and the
Cotton Duties Tribesmen 251, 252
unique position544
The Vision of the Woolsack545
References, 112, 119, 182, 183, 204
Jameson, Dr., reference68
Jeffrey, Francis, Lord, Editor of
the *Edinburgh Review*,
1803-29, an early member
of the House94
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. A. F., Mr.
Jeffreys the New Deputy
Speaker498
Jekyll, Joseph, member for Calne,
1787-181617
Jenkinson, F. B., C.B.537
Jennings, Louis340
Jingo fever, the53
Johnson, Dr. Samuel, often sat
in Reporter's Gallery, *Watch-*
ing Parliament242
Johnston, W., of Ballykilbeg :
Mr Johnston in Prison259
Beating the Orange Drum260
A Tender-hearted Fanatic532
Inspector of Fisheries533
revolutionary speech, dismissal
and death 534, 535
Johnstone, Captain, commonly
called *Governor Johnstone*,
his objection to ladies in the
House 254, 255

- Jones :
 Atherley :
 Reference430
 William :
 Career, *A Welsh Orator*370
 Reference430
Journal des Débats, reference220
 Journals of the House, the536
 Julien, Monsieur, his hat80
- Kearsley, Mr., member for
 Wigan, 1836 523, 524
 A Fancy Portrait523
 Kendal, Mrs., obtained for Lock-
 wood his first brief135
 Kenealy, Dr. :
 an undoubted power in 1875283
 his famous *bull*284
 Reference37
 Kennaway, Sir John, sketch
 portrait156
 Kensington, Lord58
 Kent, Duchess of, reference81
 Kenyon-Slaney, Colonel, his re-
 tired pay163
 Kilbride, Denis, his new dinner
 dish307
 Kilmainham Treaty, the505
 Kimber, Sir Henry, Bart., his
 complaint concerning the
 sub-editing of questions377
 Kimberley, 1st Earl :
 Leader of the House of Lords57
 References 119, 146
 King, the, and Parliament 418, 476
 King's Speech, the522
 Kinglake, A. W., historian and
 author, *Eothen* quoted308
 Kingston, Lord, *temp.* Charles
 II., reference495
 Kitchener, Lord, references 407, 507
 Knatchbull, Sir Edward, in early
 days of the century a member
 of the House462
 Knatchbull-Hugessen. Edward
 See Brabourne, Lord
 Knightley, Sir Rainald, reference149
 Kruger, President :
 strained affection, *Willie Red-*
 mond hugs Mr. Kruger 488, 489
 References 163, 426
- Labouchere, Henry :
 the Home Rule difficulty, *Mr.*
 Henry Labouchere as the
 Messenger of the Gods 184-187
 The Friendly Broker191
 A Cave-Man225
 an entertaining journalist404
- Labouchere, Henry : (*Cont.*) :
 the new party, *A Survival*429
 member of the Civil List Com-
 mittee449
 Sitting on the Civil List450
 References 59, 303, 304
 404, 411, 430, 451
 See Taunton, Lord
 Ladies Gallery :
 not in the old House of
 Commons242
 Ladies in the House 253, 254
 refuse to be excluded255
 the removal of the grille 528, 529
 References 20, 102
 Lamb, Charles, reference272
 Lansdowne, Henry, C.K., 5th
 Marquis of :
 salary compared with Lord
 Grenville's464
 References 146, 435
 1st Marquis of, reference463
 Lascelles, Henry, son of, 1st Earl
 Harewood, reference463
 Laurence, French, member for
 Peterborough, 179617
 Laurie, General, his retired pay163
 Lawson :
 Harry, reference58
 Sir Wilfrid :
 his device for a Scottish
 coin16
 story from Westmorland355
 epigram on the political
 situation504
 References 48, 257, 350, 408
 Lawyers in the House389
 Layard, Austin Henry, references 8, 504
 Leader, Mr., his support of
 Coroner Wakley338
 Lecky, W. E. H. :
 Mr. Lecky's Maiden Effort26
 oratorical gestures 321, 322
 on Gladstone's *flashing eye*382
 Mr. Lecky struck by a Pheno-
 menon383
 Lee, Sidney, on the custom of
 the Speaker's prorogation
 speech514
 Lees, Sir Elliot, Bart., his
 captain's pay164
 Legh, Hon. T. W.164
 Le Grand, Monsieur402
 Leighton, Sir Baldwin, as Chair-
 man of Quarter Sessions 143, 144
 Leng, Sir John, his way of
 putting questions405
 Lennox, Lord Henry, effects of
 his directorship461

- Letters from Camp during the Siege of Sebastopol*, by Col. Campbell, preface quoted339
- Leveson-Gower, G. G. :
References 58, 302
George, afterwards Earl Granville, member in 1836463
- Lewes, G. H., his *Life of Goethe*, reference382
- Lewis, Sir George Cornwall, his reasons for supporting a vote for the Princess Royal's dowry479
- License in the Lords157
- Lie Direct, The*519
- Li Hung Chang, his visit to the Commons158
- Literary men in Parliament 26, 403
- Littleton, Sir Thomas, a member of 1675255
- Liverpool, Robert Banks Jenkinson, 2nd Earl, reference395
- Liverpool Courier, The*, reference406
- Liverpool Daily Post, The*, reference214
- Llandaff, Henry Matthews, 1st Viscount, his conclusions in the Maybrick case.390
- Lloyd-George, D. . 411, 430
- Lockwood :
Sir Frank :
his resemblance to an old time member, *Very like Sir Frank Lockwood* ...93, 94
his career 134-141
sketches by 136-139, 140
anecdotes of 542, 543
Reference151
Colonel Mark361
- Loder, G. W. E., reference28
- Logan, J. W., reference298
- London :
Government Bill, reference277
house, an old233
London Chronicle of 1778, quoted253
- Londonderry, Charles Stewart, 6th Marquis of :
Lord Londonderry (the new Postmaster-General)374
Reference373
- Long, Charles :
an old time member462
Rt. Hon. W. H. :
his pay as Colonel of the Royal Wilts Yeomanry164
Reference498
- Lord Advocate. *See* Murray, Graham
- Lord Chamberlain in 1837 (Francis N., 2nd Marquis Conyngham) ...81, 82
- Lord Chancellor. *See* Brougham, Halsbury, Herschell, and Selborne
- Lord Chancellor, *temp.* James I. (Sir Thomas Egerton, afterwards Lord Ellesmere)510
- Lord Chief Justice. *See* Coleridge, Lord
- Lord Great Chamberlain, reference223
- Lord Privy Seal423
See Balfour, Cross, Salisbury, Tweedmouth
- Lord Steward447
- Lords, the, at Prayer203
and Commons 410, 433
In the Lion's Den411
- Lorne, Marquis of. *See* Argyll, 9th Duke
- Lough, T. :
the disadvantages of a figure of speech489
portrait490
- Loulou*, a Queen Anne 525, 526
- Louis Philippe, King :
his hat80
Reference387
- Louise, H.R.H. Princess, Duchess of Argyll, the grant on her marriage447
- Love-letters of a King and Queen, *Charles I. and Henrietta Maria* 364, 365
- Lowther :
Sir James, Pitt nominated by385
Rt. Hon. J. :
an old Parliamentary hand, *Who knew not Jemmy* 226
his loyalty to Ministers227
Peers and elections anomaly *Mental and Physical Youth*281
Catching a Big Fish on the Top of a Tree306
- Rt. Hon. J. W. :
The Chairman of Ways and Means345
Reference498
- John H., an early nineteenth-century member462
- Lubbock :
Sir John. *See* Avebury, Lord John, member of the House, *temp.* George III.462
- Lucy, Henry :
letters of Sir Frank Lockwood sent to 138, 139

566 LATER PEEPS AT PARLIAMENT

- Lucy, Henry : (*Cont.*) :
Daybreak on Westminster Bridge160
 letters of Mr. Gladstone sent to 208, 214, 216, 220
A Hasty Bath 297
A Precious Little Fat Book394
 Lydias, reference274
 Lytton, Bulwer, 1st Lord :
New Timon, quoted108
 reference403
- Mabon.* See Abraham, W.
 Macartney, W. E., Secretary to the Admiralty, June 1895413
 Macaulay, Lord :
 on the House of Commons, quoted17
 on the trial of Warren Hastings 67, 70, 74
 his hat80
 member in 183394
 on Robert Walpole, quoted215
 Reference340
 McCalmont, General, his half-pay163
 M'Carthy, Justin :
 quoted98
 statement relating to first speech corrected by Gladstone236
 Cromwell statue opposed by359
 literary gifts not, apparently, conducive to Parliamentary success404
 References 230, 237
 Macdona, J. :
 accident while exercising his rectorial functions205
 a member of the *Pigtail Party*336
 Mace, the :
 mysterious disappearance of the first, *temp.* Charles I. ; Cromwell's *bauble*270
 the one now in use271
 one presented to Jamaica by Charles II.271
 never carried into the presence of the sovereign419
 Reference515
 M'Iver, David, reference37
 McIver, Sir Lewis, a quiet but effective opponent of the Home Rule Bill187
 McKenna, R., references 411, 429, 430
 Mackintosh, Sir James, member for Nairn, 1813, philosopher and historian17
- Maclagan, Dr., Archbishop of York :
The Order of Precedence 424, 425
He was snappish to the Archbishop of York432
 Reference434
 Maclise, Daniel, R.A., reference.....43
 Macnaghten, Edward, Lord, Lord of Appeal, reference204
 MacNeill, J. G. Swift :
 on *Public Nuisances*104
Have you seen Mr. Ward? 164, 165
 his reception of the news from South Africa, *The Joy of Swift MacNeill* 507, 508
 Maden, J. H., reference430
 Magee, Dr., Bishop of Peterborough, on Episcopal life in Parliament, quoted ...29, 31
 Maguire :
 J. F., reference278
 Rochfort :
 Reference8
 portrait9
 Malmesbury, J. H. Harris, 3rd Earl of, Foreign Secretary, 1852, his anecdote of Lord Panmure 315, 316
Manchester Guardian, The, reference406
 Manners, Robert, member *temp.* George III.462
 Manners-Sutton :
 Charles (afterwards Viscount Canterbury), Speaker, 1817-1834514
 Thomas, early nineteenth-century member462
 Marjoribanks, Mr. See Tweedmouth, Lord
 Marlborough :
 George Charles, 8th Duke of, the Queen and the disposal of his pictures439
 Duchess of, wife of the 6th Duke, reference85
 Martin, John, reference37
 Marvell, Andrew, quoted476
 Mary, Queen, references 77, 367
 Master of the Horse. See Portland, Duke of, and Oxenbridge, Lord
 Matthew, Lord Justice, his witty saying ... 267
 Matthews, Rt. Hon. Henry. See Llandaff, Lord
 Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E., Bart., reference172
 May, Sir Erskine, references 8, 144, 145

- Maybrick, Mrs., Lord Russell's defence; conclusions of Lord Llandaff and Sir Matthew W. Ridley 390, 391
- Mayo, 6th Earl :
the opposition to his appointment as Governor-General of India278
his doubts as to his being recalled, and assassination279
- Mayor, Lord, of London, *temp.* Charles I. See Gurney, Sir Richard
- Mazzini, Guiseppe, 1830-62, Stanfeld's intimacy with, *The late Mr. Stanfeld and Massini*460
- Mehemet Pasha, reference308
- Melbourne, Lord (1779-1848):
portrait, *Two Prime Ministers*86
References 214, 249, 311
- Mellish, Miss, her bequest to Mr. Villiers263
- Melmoth the Wanderer*, romance mentioned by Thackeray382
- Memorial brasses in Westminster Hall409
- Merchant Shipping Bill and Mr. Plimsoll, *Mr. Plimsoll's Outburst* 198, 199
- Methuen :
Paul, grandfather to Lord Methuen, member for Wiltshire, demands an apology and retraction524
Paul S., 3rd Lord :
reception of the news of his defeat 506-508
his grandfather524
Reference407
- Mill, John Stuart, reference403
- Millais, Sir J. E., his portrait of Mr. Gladstone210
- Milton, John, reference28
- Mirror of Parliament*, 1845 :
quoted173
Reference237
- Mistress of the Robes (Duchess of Buccleuch), reference447
- Monkswell, Robert, 2nd Lord, reference58
- Monmouth, Duke of, his arrest a topic in the Mostyn News-Letters392
- Montagu :
the house of, old and new style508
- Montagu : (*Cont.*) :
Sir Edward, Knight, member for Huntingdon, afterwards Baron Montagu and 1st Earl of Sandwich :
his diary 508-510
receives an account of the arrest of the five members511
of Beaulieu, Henry John Douglas-Scott, 1st Lord, his service to the State by preserving the Abbey and archives509
- Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de, reference365
- Morgan :
F. C., reference156
Sir G. Osborne :
his career151
The late Sir G. O. Morgan152
outrage on his portmanteau, *The New Portmanteau*153
- Moritz, Carl Philipp, German scholar and dramatist, 1757-1793 :
his notes on the House of Commons, 1782 238-242
Reference253
- Morley :
Rt. Hon. Arnold, principal *Whip* to G. L. Party, 1886-1892 269, 301
Rt. Hon. John :
his *Life of Gladstone* 147, 485
his future renown404
member of the Civil List Committee, 1889450
References 7, 229, 301, 451
- Morning Chronicle, The*, reference327
- Morris, Michael, 1st Lord, a Lord of Appeal :
his undelivered speech30
sentence on Mr. Johnston260
- Mortimer, Earl of March, reference35
- Mostyn, L. N. V. Lloyd., 3rd Lord, his collection of *London Letters* 391, 392
- Moving the Speaker into the Chair200
- Mowatt, Sir Francis, K.C.B., reference342
- Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John :
The Father of the House, his career 148, 149
his unique experience of coronations, *Young Mowbray*174

Mowbray, Right Hon. Sir John : (*Cont.*) :

Chairman of Committee of Selection	.....282
his death	293, 295
his good qualities and amiability, <i>Born just before Waterloo</i>	.....294
his enjoyment of Gladstone's five hours' speech	.....393
References	155, 306
<i>Mr. Gregory's Letter-Box</i> , 1813-1835, reference	.....283
Mullet, Mr., butler to Sir E. Watkin, "turns on Jupiter"	.....454
Mundella, Rt. Hon. A. J., reference	.....301
Murnaghan, George, discovers a new word	.....34
Murray :	
Colonel Wyndham, his emoluments	.....163
Rt. Hon. A. G., Lord-Advocate, 1896-1903 :	
scores off Mr. Caldwell	103, 104
Reference	.....434
Musical-box, the irrepressible, anecdote by Lord Onslow	.....482
Naples, ex-King of, reference	.....283
Napoleon :	
I., references	16, 331, 353
III., reference	.....364
Nasmyth hammer, the, and a new hat :	
<i>Crushed Again</i>	.....96
Reference	.....484
National Portrait Gallery, the, pictures of the House in 1742 and 1793 at	...91-93
Negro Emancipation Bill, reference	.....237
Neilson, Mr., of the <i>Times</i> , assists Disraeli in preparing his speeches	.....475
<i>New Oxford Dictionary</i> , the, reference	.....103
New peer, his predicament, <i>What on Earth is my Name?</i>	.....273
<i>New Timon</i> , by Lord Lytton, quoted	.....108
<i>Newcastle Chronicle</i> , <i>The</i> , under Cowen's proprietorship	.....349
Newcastle :	
3rd Duke of, and Pitt, a Cabinet Council of two	.....50
Henry Pelham, 4th Duke of, befriends Gladstone	.....385

Newcastle : (*Cont.*) :

Henry Pelham, 5th Duke of, criticised as a member of the Cabinet responsible for the Crimean War	.....339
his remark to Abraham Hayward thereon	.....340
Newdegate, C. N. :	
his funereal voice and solemn manner	.....37
an old Tory	.....492
once mistaken for Parnell	.....493
his opinion of Mr. Whalley, <i>Mr. Whalley as imagined by Mr. Newdegate</i>	.....494
Reference	.....6
Newdigate :	
Sir Richard, <i>temp.</i> 1675, M.S.	
News-Letters written to	494, 495
Mr. Serjeant, member for Tamworth, 1660	.....494
Newman, Cardinal, reference	.....147
Newnes, Sir George, Bart., portrait	.....406
Newspapers in the House :	
the Speakers ruling as to questions founded upon reports in	.....85
Mr. Gladstone, unlike Mr. Balfour, not indifferent to newspapers	.....214
Nicholson, A.W., reference	.....537
Nightingale, Miss Florence, reference	.....439
Norman, Henry, <i>The Real Japan</i>	.....403
North, Frederick, Lord, Premier 1770-82, reference	.....385
Northampton, W. Douglas-Maclean Compton, 5th Marquis of	.....59
Northbrook, Thomas G. Baring, 1st Earl, reference	.....94
Northcote, Sir Stafford. <i>See</i> Iddesleigh	
Norton :	
Captain, reference	.....430
Hon. Mrs. Caroline, her story relating to Lord Panmure	315, 316
Lady, 1778, reference	.....254
Nottingham, Charles, 1st Earl of, Lord High Admiral, officiated as Lord High Steward at the coronation of James I., reference	.....509
Oates, Titus, reference	.....392
O'Brien :	
J. Francis Xavier :	
<i>The Four Quarters of Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien</i>	.....65

- O'Brien : (*Cont.*) :
 J. Francis Xavier : (*Cont.*) :
 a respected member of the
 Irish Party66
 W., references 64, 177
Observer, The :
 article relating to Gladstone's
 onslaught upon Chamber-
 lain, 1892, reference218
 article describing Mr. Chris-
 topher Syke's adventures,
 1884 446, 447
O'Clery, the Chevalier, reference37
O'Connell, Daniel :
 Trying on O'Connell's Hat79
 in Peel's Parliament95
 described in *New Timon*108
 References 56, 376
O'Connor :
 Arthur, his retired pay and
 pension163
 T. P., effects of journalism on
 his Parliamentary career404
Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, reference.....35
O'Donnell, Frank H. :
 The O'Donnell Terror 289, 290
 References 37, 39, 40
O'Gorman, Major :
 his memorablespeech, portrait493
 Reference37
Old Age Pension Committee,
 reference313
Old days in the Commons213
Old diplomacy, the402
Old Sarum :
 notes from a prehistoric *Dod*395
 Reference76
Old style member, an76
O'Leary, Dr., reference37
O'Mara, James, his *bull*488
Onslow :
 William H., 4th Earl of :
 his unique position 378, 379
 his story of the musical box.....482
 Reference375
 Sir Richard, Speaker, 1738,
 represented in Gravelot's
 picture in the National Por-
 trait Gallery91
Orange, Prince of, afterwards
 William III., referred to in
 the Mostyn News-Letters392
Orange Free State, reference435
Oratorical gestures320
Orchardson, W. Q., R.A. :
 narrow escape of his portrait
 of Lord Peel199
 "moving the Speaker into the
 Chair"200
Orchardson, W. Q., R.A. : (*Cont.*) :
 an unrecorded sitting in the
 Commons201
 his portrait reminiscent of the
 Speaker's scathing indigna-
 tion 202, 203
 Reference107
Osborne, the, Queen's yacht,
 reference352
O'Shea, Captain :
 receives a telegram from
 Chamberlain185
 Reference506
Ossington, Viscount. *See* Deni-
 son, John E.
Oxenbridge, Lord :
 Master of the Horse 1892-94
 Reference301
Oxford, Edward Harley, 2nd
 Earl, reference525
Painting the Map Red68
Pairing545
Palgrave, Sir Reginald, refer-
 ence409
Pall Mall Gazette, the, refer-
 ences 216, 220, 406
Palmer :
 G. W., reference416
 Sir Charles, reference156
 W. H., reference416
Palmerston, Lord :
 in Peel's parliament94
 his bitter retort, *Oh, it was*
 only you, was it? 307, 308
 distributed the relics at
 Walmer Castle331
 his manner of writing to the
 Queen420
 his dismissal, *The Dismissal*
 of Pam.437
 his views on directorships 460, 461
 Pam as a Winchester Boy463
 References 94, 116, 311, 330,
 438, 463, 542
Panmure, Lord, Mrs. Norton's
 story relating to 315, 316
Parish Councils Bill, refer-
 ences 119, 194, 251
Parker :
 Charles, reference58
 Sir Gilbert, references 402, 403
Parliamentary :
 Bath, the285
 caves225
 reforms287
 reports441
Parnell, C. S. :
 his apogee, *Mr. Parnell Rises*73

- Parnell, C. S. : (Cont.):
 reception after Pigott's suicide74
 after his fall75
 the compromise, *Storming*
Down to Downing Street 193
 Dr. Playfair refuses to name197
 his offer to retire 220, 221
 a collision averted *The Buffer*
State 229, 330
Irish Obstruction318
 The Kilmainham Treaty 505, 506
 References 3, 39, 41, 183, 185,
 186, 187, 196, 274, 290, 318, 440,
 465, 493
 Pease, Sir Joseph, reference156
 Peel :
 Arthur Wellesley, 1st Viscount,
 Speaker 1884-95 :
 Sir Robert's formal intro-
 duction to his brother8
 the Peel portrait 199-201
Scathing Indignation 202, 203
 hopeful of the discovery of
 Cromwell's mace271
 his curious discovery of the
 effect of a heated debate
 on the temperature of the
 house297
 goes on board the *Tantallon*
Castle to visit Mr. Glad-
 stone360
 a non-official dinner at
 which *Mabon* sings375
 References 7, 118, 141, 269, 326
See Speaker.
 Sir Robert, 2nd Baronet :
 his parliament in 183394
 his belief in a despotic
 government for Ireland280
 References 17, 133, 145, 181,
 213, 249, 385, 531
 Sir Robert, 3rd Baronet :
 his maiden speech5
Dicky Doyle's sketch por-
 trait6
 his career, portrait by
 F. C. G.7
 introduced to his brother,
 the Speaker8
 his unexpected death9
 Reference126
 Peers and Elections280
Pendennis, reference 327
 Pensioners in the House of
 Commons162
 Perceval, Spencer, 1762-1812,
 references 394, 409, 463
 Peterborough, Bishop of. *See*
 Magee, Dr.
- Petty, John Henry, son of the
 Marquis of Landsdowne,
 an early nineteenth-century
 member463
 Philip III., King of Spain,
 reference 402
 Pickard, B., reference430
 Pictures in an Old Parliament238
 Pigott, Richard, his suicide ...73, 74
Pigtail Party, the 335, 336
 Pine, John, line engraver91
Pip, a character in *Great*
Expectations, reference 214
 Pitt :
 William, the elder, after-
 wards Earl of Chatham, a
 cabinet council of two, his
 three hours' speech on the
 Peace of Paris 50, 393, 394
 William, son, 1759-1806 :
 in Pitt's Parliament .. 92-94
 his room in Walmer Castle329
Talleyrand Sleeping in
Pitt's Bed330
 his chair331
 his maiden speech371
 his salaries464
 his Chancellor's robe re-
 tained by Disraeli528
 References 91, 117, 238, 376, 394
 Mrs., reference50
 Pitt's Parliament92
 Plato, reference 51
 Playfair, Lyon, Lord, Chairman
 of Committees, 1880-83 :
 portrait196
 his struggles with Irish members 196
 speech on margarine198
 Reference 55
 Plimsoll, Samuel, the Merchant
 Shipping Bill :
Mr. Plimsoll's outburst198
 although obliged to apologise
 made his *mark*199
 Reference 37
 Plunket :
 David Robert. *See* Rathmore,
 Lord
 Hon. Horace, reference 26
 Pope, Alexander, quoted154
 Pope, the, references, 493, 533
 Portland :
 3rd Duke of :
 his salary as Home Secretary 464
 4th Duke :
 Prime Minister, 1807394
 Reference173
 6th Duke :
 Master of the Horse, 1886447

Portland : (*Cont.*) :
 6th Duke : (*Cont.*) :
 manuscripts containing re-
 ferences to Harcourt
 family, preserved by525
 Potter, T. B. :
 his good temper and imper-
 turbability228
 prevents a collision, *The Buffer*
 State229, 230
 Power, Richard, reference274
 Prayer Book, romance of the366
 Precedence, curiosities of424
 Prehistoric *Dod*, a394
 Premier and Primate431
 Press, the405
 news agencies441, 442
 Press Gallery, the :
 a voice from45
 Shakespeare up to date179
 curious incident befalling a
 member of200
 Dr. Johnson watching Parlia-
 ment from242
 Lord Russell and Sir E. Clarke
 members of388, 389
 References87, 325
Prime Ministers, a Short History
 of, a fearful warning, quoted.....35
 Primrose League, the :
 not a *public nuisance*104
 The Cult of the Primrose384
 some of its founders385
 Prince Consort, H. R. H. the :
 resides at Walmer Castle
 during his honeymoon329
 his swift journey from Dover,
 Cupid as Post-boy427, 428
 Queen's letter dismissing
 Palmerston dictated by438
 Reference478
 Prison experiences of Irish members.....64
 Prodicus of Ceos, reference51
 Protagoras of Plato—an early
 bedside discussion51
 Protestants and Catholics376
 Provence, Hugh, Earl of, reference....467
 Psychical Society, a story for396
 Public audiences175
 Pulpit attraction, a singular80
Pumblechook, a character in *Great*
 Expectations, reference214
Punch, a *Punch* dinner :
 He took a great Interest in
 Punch208, 209
 References5, 43, 57, 135, 136
 Queen's prayers for Parliament, the...398
 Speech398-400, 410

Questions :
 subediting and censorship376
 the plague of465
 The Irish Secretary and
 Questions466
Quisanté, reference403
 Race to the altar, a427
 Radnor, Jacob, 6th Earl of
 (Lord Folkestone), reference.....407
 Raglan, 1st Lord, his death in
 the Crimea, reference315
Random Recollections of the Lords
 and Commons, quoted 371-373
 Rat-catchers, official, English
 and French386
 Rathmore, D. R. Plunket, 1st
 Lord, Solicitor-General, Ire-
 land, 1875-77 :
 his retort to Sir George Camp-
 bell14
 his predicament, *What on*
 Earth is my Name?272, 273
Real Japan, by Henry Norman,
 reference403
 Redmond :
 John E., references417, 519
 William, his choice of a bench40
 A Horrible Discovery41
 makes himself agreeable, *Who*
 Killed Parnell?41
 The Infant Roscius361
 his tactics in obstruction465
 Catches Sight of Mr. Chamber-
 lain482
 a prolific breeder of *bulls*,
 Willie Redmond hugs Mr.
 Kruger488, 489
 In the Bull-field522
 References75, 417
 Reform Bill, 1832 :
 References279, 318
 the Act of 1867, reference422
 Reichsrath, the Austro-Hun-
 garian, a source of comfort
 to English legislators, *Carry-*
 ing Mr. Flavin Out481
 Reid, Sir Robert T., Q.C. :
 a favourite subject with Frank
 Lockwood136
 Reference274
 Rendel, Stuart, 1st Lord, refer-
 ence58
 Reporters in the House242
 Reuter, Baron, Reference392
 Rhodes, Cecil :
 his trial67
 In Westminster Hall67
 Mr. Rhodes and the Map ...69, 70

- Richmond, 6th Duke of, reference146
- Ridding, Dr., Bishop of Southwell, successfully objects to the daily reading of prayers by the youngest Bishop204
- Ridley :
- Sir Matthew White, 2nd Baronet, member for Newcastle, reference462
- Matthew White, 1st Lord, Home Secretary, 1895: replies to Mr. MacNeil, *Sir Matthew White-Ridley is funny*104
- his conclusions with regard to Mrs. Maybrick391
- Reference65
- Rigby :
- Mr., member in 1782241
- Sir John, Q.C., Solicitor-General, 1894-95, reference302
- Ripon, G. F. S. Robinson, 1st Marquis, reference 146
- Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T.:
- his salary as Home Secretary464
- References 156, 415
- Roberts, Lord, reference407
- Roche, Sir Boyle, reference259
- Rockingham, C. W. Wentworth, Marquis of, reference385
- Rodney, Admiral, reference241
- Roebuck, J. A.:
- sometime member for Bath, and Sheffield, takes Mr. Dillwyn's seat305
- crosses over to Conservative side306
- References 95, 523
- Rollit, Sir Albert, gives Frank Lockwood his first brief135
- Rolls, Master of the, 1793 (Sir R. P. Arden, afterwards Lord Alvanley)94
- Romance of the Peerage, a, *The Lost Eye-Glass*264
- Ronayne, J. P., reference37
- Rosebery :
- 4th Earl of, description in Grant's *Random Recollections*, quoted 372, 373
- A. P. Primrose, 5th Earl of: speeches founded upon literary tastes27
- aids the project of the Eton bust57
- the Premiership 115-118, 248, 250-253, 274
- Rosebery : (Cont.) :
- A. P. Primrose, 5th Earl of : (Cont.) :
- A Prisoner in the House of Lords*116
- attitude while speaking 322, 325
- Presiding at a Lecture*333
- his reason for the prevailing dulness at Westminster 334, 335
- A Cordite Explosion* 356, 357
- description of his grandfather 372, 373
- attacks the Royal Declaration Bill, *A Belted Earl thumping the Table* 515-517
- References 146, 225, 301, 404, 412, 444, 548
- Ross, Janet, her *Three Generations of Englishwomen* quoted5, 6
- Rossa, O'Donovan, reference89
- Rothschild, Baron Ferdinand, his amiability and good nature, *Baron "Ferdy"* 243-245
- Round, J., reference156
- Rowney, Tom, mentioned in the Harcourt archives 525, 526
- Rowton, Lord, his custodianship of Disraeli's correspondence.....147
- Royal Calendar or Annual Register for 1801, Dod's*
- "Grandfather," reference461
- Royal Declaration Bill 515, 516
- Russell :
- 1st Earl (Lord John Russell) :
- his hat80
- appears in Hayter's picture, 183394
- his manner of addressing the Queen420
- The Dismissal of Pam*437
- References 116, 249, 523
- General, his half-pay163
- G. W. E., Under Sec. India, 1892-94, reference302
- Lord Charles, reference100
- Lord William, an early nineteenth-century member463
- Sir Edward H., Editor of *The Liverpool Daily Post*, reference 214
- of Killowen, Lord (Sir Charles Russell) :
- portrait and career 388-391
- References 73, 302
- Russia, Emperor of (Alexander III.), reference 350
- Rutland, J. J. R. Manners, 7th Duke of, reference146
- Rylands, Peter, reference387

- St. Cecilia, Sir J. Tenniel's fresco
at Westminster ...43, 44
- St. George and the Dragon,
device on Coins, *What a
fearful Creature!*15
- St. Mary's, Edinburgh, reference.....246
- St. Oswald, Rowland Winn,
2nd Lord, references ...5, 269
- St. Stephen's Club, references4, 5
- Salisbury :
Robert Cecil, 3rd Marquis :
his speeches founded upon
literary training27
Two Prime Ministers86
likeness to Mr. Balfour,
Substance and Shadow108
his failing health127
his successor166
A "Ballon D'Essai"168
his difficulty in finding places
for ex-ministers 225-227
distrust of his foreign policy228
his memory, *Sitting out a
Debate* 276, 277
manner of speaking, *Auto-
matic Gestures* 323, 325
extols the Primrose League,
The Cult of the Primrose384
his literary training, *A
Struggling Journalist*405
his salary as Lord Privy Seal 414, 415
The Lord Privy Seal423
his attitude towards Bishops,
A Shy at a Bishop431
*He was Snappish to the
Archbishop of York*432
his personality 433, 444
Coruscating and Blazing434
References 30, 53, 130, 132,
146, 147, 169 (n.), 174, 182, 183,
311, 312, 334, 335, 339, 342, 368,
379, 385, 398, 400, 413, 428, 453,
530, 548
- J. E. H. Gascoyne Cecil, 4th
Marquis of (Lord Cran-
borne), references 109, 164,
408, 417
- Sancho Panza, reference212
- Sandhurst, 2nd Lord, Governor
of Bombay, reference302
- Saunderson, Colonel, reference361
- Scarlett, James, Lord Abinger,
1769-1844, reference17
- Schleswig - Holstein, Prince
Frederick Christian of,
reference283
- Scotch Public Health Bill103
- Scott-Montagu, Hon. J. W. E.
D., his motor-car 462, 508, 509
- Scott, C. P. :
Editor *Manchester Guardian*,
reference406
Mr., doorkeeper in the
Commons99
William Montagu, an early
nineteenth-century member462
- Seale-Hayne, Rt. Hon. C., the
Eton dinner originated by,
Some Old Eton Boys ...57-59
- Secretaries to the Treasury499
- Secretary of State for India. *See*
Hamilton, Lord George
- Selborne, Roundell Palmer, 1st
Earl, Lord Chancellor :
his hat80
Reference204
- Selwyn, Geo. A., quoted371
- Serjeant-at-Arms :
*The Serjeant-at-Arms will go
and fetch Him* 282, 283
References 3, 91, 99,
100, 102, 172, 198, 254-256, 271,
341-344, 419, 520
his deputy419
- Seven Bishops, trial of the 392
- Sexton, T. :
An Uncomfortable Position76
References 46, 192, 288, 450
- Shaftesbury, Cropley Ashley, 6th
Earl of :
early nineteenth - century
member462
Sir A. Ashley - Cooper, 7th
Earl of (Lord Ashley), in
Peel's Parliament94
- Shakespeare up to date180
- Shah, the, reference136
- Shand, A. B., 1st Lord, Lord
of Appeal204
- Shaw - Lefevre, Charles. *See*
Eversley, Viscount
- Shiel :
Edward, his unheard speech328
Richard Lalor (1791-1851) :
his speech at Penenden
Heath327
Reference95
- Shibboleth* (Judg. xii. 6) with re-
gard to Winston Churchill's
pronunciation of the letter S.....426
- Shipden, John, solicitor to Cinque
Port Barons 467, 472
- Siam, King of, references 157, 409, 447
- Simpson, General, reference315
- Sleeping habits211
- Smith :
Abel, reference156
Hon. W. F. D., reference450

- Smith : (*Cont.*) :
- Sam, early nineteenth-century member462
 - Rt. Hon. W. H. :
 - alters the period of the Session25
 - Old Morality* and Lord Randolph Churchill ...83, 84
 - makes a tour with Lord Derby, *The Head of the Army and Chief of the Fleet*165
 - reinstates the Wellington and Pitt relics at Walmer Castle 330, 331
 - References 16, 132, 161, 450
 - Smoking-room confidences127
 - Smollett, P. B., reference37
 - Smyth, Major, Thackeray's step-father327
 - Socrates, reference51
 - Solicitor-General (1884). *See* Herschell, Lord
 - Somers, John, Lord, Whig statesman, 1650-1716, reference68
 - Somerset, Lord Protector, reference35
 - Southwell, Bishop of. *See* Ridding, Dr.
 - Speaker, the 2, 6, 7, 8, 16, 18-22, 26, 32-34, 37, 42, 55, 85, 86 *et seq.*
See also Abercromby, Addington, Brand, Denison, Gully, Onslow, Peel, and Shaw-Lefevre
 - Speaker's eye, the :
 - Waiting for an Opening*19
 - Trying to catch the Speaker's Eye*19
 - Missed*20
 - Spectator*, the newspaper, reference214
 - Spencer, J. P., 5th Earl, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland :
 - dismisses Johnston of Ballykilbeg534
 - References 62, 146, 251
 - 3rd Earl. *See* Althorp, Lord
 - Rt. Hon. C. R. :
 - I am not an Agricultural Labourer ; "Bobby" as he might have been*137
 - Reference302
 - Spenser, Edmund, reference28
 - Stackpoole, Captain, reference37
 - Stalbridge, Richard de A. Grosvenor, 1st Lord, Liberal *Whip*, 1880-86 :
 - Reference268
 - Standard*, the, reference389
 - Stanhope, Rt. Hon. Edward :
 - secures Hickel's picture of the House in 179393
 - Philip Henry, 5th Earl, his private note on Walmer Castle 329, 330
 - Hon. P. J., 4th son of 5th Earl, reference430
 - Stanley, Arthur Penrhyn, Dean of Westminster :
 - his attentive congregation80
 - Edward, early nineteenth-century member463
 - Edward Geoffrey. *See* Derby, 14th Earl
 - Mr. *See* Derby, 14th Earl
 - Lord, eldest son of 16th Earl
 - Derby, Financial Secretary to War Office, reference408
 - Stansfeld, James, 1820-1869, his intimacy with Mazzini460
 - Stephens, Sir J. Fitzjames :
 - prosecutes Governor Eyre143
 - his summing up of the Maybrick case390
 - Stone, Sir Benjamin, his collection of photographs, *Sir B. Stone posing a Subject* 539-541
 - Storey, Samuel, reference15
 - Strafford, Thomas Wentworth, Earl of, reference68
 - Strand Magazine*, quoted82
 - Strangers' Gallery :
 - A Terrible Offence*44
 - Notice to Quit ; Eviction*45
 - References 89, 90, 238, 242, 254, 334, 393
 - Stratford, Canon, *temp.* Queen Anne, his letter to Edward Harley 525, 526
 - Sturt, Charles, member *temp.* George III.462
 - Sullivan, A. M., reference350
 - Sultan, the, reference308
 - Sutherland :
 - Duchess of, wife of 3rd Duke, receives Mr. Gladstone at Cliveden154
 - Sir Thomas, reference79
 - Swansea, H. Hussey Vivian, 1st Lord, references 58, 149, 193, 217, 450
 - Swords and spurs in the House172
 - Sydenham, member for Exeter 1753, reference392
 - Sykes, Christopher :
 - brings in a Bill, *The Air of a Stolid Man surveying the*

- Sykes, Christopher : (*Cont.*) :
capering of a Cage of Monkeys 256-258
 the King's enjoyment of the story 446, 447
- Take care of Dowb*314
- Talbot :
 Christopher :
 an early nineteenth-century member95
 Reference149
 Rt. Hon. J. G., portrait 155, 156
 C. R. M., reference217
 Miss, reference6
- Talleyrand, Prince :
 visits Walmer Castle329
 Talleyrand sleeping in Pitt's Bed330
 Reference147
- Tanner Dr. :
 gives the *lie direct*519
 Judas ! Judas !520
 Reference33
- Tantallon Castle*, the 12, 356, 359, 360
- Taunton, Henry Labouchere,
 Lord, member in 183394
- Taylour, Colonel, reference270
- Teck :
 H. R. H. the Duke of, his interrupted speech 483, 484
 H. R. H. the Duchess of, reference448
- Telephone, one of its disadvantages106
- Midnight Telephone, The*106
- Temple :
 Sir Richard :
 his career16
 Turns his Back on the House ..17, 18
 Frederick K., Archbishop of Canterbury, *The Order of Precedence* 424, 425
- Tenniel, Sir John, his earliest cartoon ..43, 44
- Terrace, the 360-363,
 References 413, 414, 541
 In Solitary State176
 The Lord Chancellor wielding the Teapot363
- Terry, Miss Ellen, her tendency to stage fright487
- Thackeray, W. M. :
 his lines on Lalor Sheil's speech327
 letter quoted382
 Reference80
 Thin Red Line, The, its origin171
- Thistleton-Dyer, Sir W., opposed to planting trees on the Terrace414
- Thompson, Poulett, an early nineteenth-century member95
- Thomson, Dr. William, Archbishop of York, his hat80
- Thorold, Dr., Bishop of Winchester, references 432, 434
- Three Acres and a Cow, *Ah, yes, I used to sing it but that was years ago*170
- Thynne, Edward, execution of his murderers, reference392
- Tichborne claimant, references 89, 284, 325
- Times, The* :
 The Duke of Argyll writes to The Times215
 References 13, 95, 148, 178, 179, 201, 214, 327, 404, 408, 442, 475, 488
- Trade in Parliament406
- Trelawney, Sir John, his record of a Waggish Speaker392
- Trevelyan :
 Sir George :
 his proposal to alter the period of the Session24
 portrait60
 his difficulties on the Home Rule question61
 Chief Secretary for Ireland62
 his efforts for the agricultural labourer63
 withdraws from the Cabinet.....183
 References 193, 287, 301, 340
 Lady, finds in her drawing-room the blood-stained coat of Lord Frederick Cavendish.....62
- Truefitt, Mr., reference370
- Twain, Mark, attends a long sitting of the Reichsrath480
- Tweedmouth, Edward Marjoribanks, 2nd Lord :
 Lord Tweedmouth and the New Rifle ...91, 92
 References 59, 274, 302
- Twelve o'clock rule, the160
- Twentieth-century Ephraimite, a.....425
- Typewritten petitions172
- Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. *See* Brodrick, W. St. J. ; Curzon, Lord ; and Cranborne, Viscount
- Under the Clock*, reference265
- Unrecorded sitting, an200
- Unwin, Mr. Fisher, references5, 98

- Vandyck, Sir Anthony, reference.....364
- Vansittart :
- Nicholas, member for Old Sarum, 1808, references 395, 396
- Mrs., her dream396
- Venus, Homer's distaste for210
- Verney, Sir Harry, an early nineteenth-century member95
- Vice-Chamberlain of Queen's Household. *See* Barrington, Lord
- Victoria, Queen :
- her accession81
- last visit to Westminster82
- Sir John Mowbray's reminiscences of 174, 294
- Lord Rosebery's Premiership suggested by248
- declines (1839) to dismiss her Bedchamber women 249
- reluctantly sends, in 1880, for Mr. Gladstone250
- spends a portion of her honeymoon at Walmer Castle329
- her yachts352
- her prayers for Parliament 398-400
- the leader's nightly letter 420, 421
- probable effects had she died during a General Election 422, 423
- her personal share in administrative work 436-438
- wishes some of the Duke of Marlborough's pictures to be bought by the nation439
- her Civil List447
- her savings448
- her grandchildren 450, 451
- her private fortune477
- her nervousness in public ceremonies 487, 488
- transcript of proclamation announcing her death and successor 536, 537
- References 177, 223, 245, 311, 315, 427, 462, 478, 479, 486, 510, 515, 527
- Victoria and Albert*, Queen's Yacht352
- Villiers, Rt. Hon. C. P.:
- Father of the House*, an early nineteenth-century member95
- his Cabinet pension 261-264
- References 123, 148, 149, 151, 217, 338, 462
- Vincent :
- Sir Edgar, reference417
- Sir Howard, reference417
- Vivian, Sir Hussey. *See* Swansea, Lord
- Waggish Speaker, a392
- Wakley, Thomas, reference338
- Wales :
- Prince of, son of James II., birth of, reference392
- Prince of (Duke of York), references 447, 449
- See* Edward VII. and George IV.
- Princess of (Duchess of York), reference244
- See* Alexandra, Queen
- Walker, Sir Patrick, reference246
- Walter John, reference95
- Walmer Castle 329, 330, 464
- Walpole :
- Sir Robert :
- in Gravelot's Picture in the National Portrait Gallery91
- references 17, 36, 47, 48, 215, 216
- Horace, his account of a Cabinet Council of two 50, 51, 522
- Walrond, Sir William :
- On Guard—Sir William Walrond, Chief Conservative Whip*268
- Reference499
- Warcop, Sir Edmund, *temp.* Queen Anne525
- Ward :
- E. A., sketch after84
- Hon. R. A., his pay and allowance165
- Warwick, Lord, *temp.* Charles I. reference510
- Waterloo, battle of, references 93, 295
- Watkin, Sir Edward :
- Channel tunnel, *Burrowing Powers; The Tunnel Terror* 451-453
- his peremptoriness454
- a novel way of entertaining guests455
- Watson, Lord, reference204
- Webster, Sir Richard. *See* Alverstone, Lord
- Wedderburn, Sir W., reference430
- Weir, J. G., reference33
- Welby, Reginald E., Lord, reference58
- Wellesley, Sir Arthur, Irish Secretary 1808, reference394
- Wellington, Duke of :
- his relics at Walmer Castle331
- References 174, 249, 295, 329, 330
- West, Sir Algernon, explains, *Take care of Dowb* 314, 315
- Reference325

- Westminster :
 two famous trials67
 Queen's last visit to82
 dulness at333
 Bridge : *Daybreak on Westminster Bridge*160
 Hall :
 in the olden time87
Old Westminster Hall88
 in the *Claimant's* day89
 as seen by a foreigner238
 References 14, 15, 408, 409, 418, 419, 467-470, 511
 Wetherell, Sir Charles, father of parliamentary obstruction318
 Whalley, Geo. H. :
 his mysterious taps325
 Mr. Newdegate's pet aversion, *Mr. Whalley as imagined by Mr. Newdegate*494
 Reference37
 Wharton :
 Philip, Duke of, references ..47, 48
 J. L., member of the Civil List Committee, '89449
 Whewell, Dr., reference17
 Whig and Radical dissentients183
Whips and Hats267
 Whips' room, prizes of the269
 Whitbread, Samuel :
 portrait188
 a member of the same name in 1796462
 References 149, 450
 White :
 Henry, chaplain, an old story retold309
 Sir G., reference435
 White's *Inner Life of the House of Commons*, references 98, 100, 101, 236
 Whitmore, John, member *temp.* George III.462
 Wilberforce, William, reference463
 Wilkins, Mrs., midwife in attendance at the birth of James the second's son392
 William :
 II., German Emperor :
The Imperial Nephew446
 References 418, 445, 447
 the Conqueror, reference35
 Rufus, reference67
 III., King, references 392 422, 533
 IV., King :
 portrait after H. K. B.249
 his Civil List 426, 478
 References 81, 174, 248, 294
 Williams :
 John, Archbishop of York, 1641510
 Powell, references 128, 226
 Mr. doorkeeper, reference99
 Willox, J. A., reference406
 Wills Coffee House, reference495
 Wilson :
 C. H.156
 Joshua, M. A., his Biographical Memoirs, 1808, quoted 394-396
 Mr., doorkeeper Ladies' Gallery, portrait102
 Winchelsea, 9th Earl of, reference170
 12th Earl of :
 portrait230
 References 228, 231
 Winchester :
 Bishop of. *See* Thorold, Dr.
 15th Marquis of, killed in South Africa407
 Windsor :
 Castle, readership at448
 Dean of, reference320
 Lord, *temp.* Charles II.271
 Winn, Rowland. *See* St. Oswald, Lord
 Winterbotham, A. B., reference193
 Wolff, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Drummond, references 83, 132, 373, 374, 384, 385
 Wolseley, Lord, references 339, 438
 Women's Suffrage Bill 21, 298
 Wordsworth :
 Dorothy, reference160
 William, quoted 159, 160
 Working Classes (Housing) Act, its application to *nuisances*104
 Workman's Compensation Bill, reference133
World, the, reference265
 Wortley :
 Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart, reference462
 James Stuart, member *temp.* George III.462
 Written speeches473
 Wyndham :
 Rt. Hon. George, references 164, 226, 227, 521, 532, 533
 Thomas, early nineteenth-century member462
 Wynn :
 Miss, references ...81, 82
 Sir Watkin Williams, early nineteenth-century member462

Yachts, Queen Victoria's	.....352	York :	
Yates, Edmund, references	...77, 78	Archbishop of. <i>See</i> Maclagan,	
Yellow window blind, the, at		Thomson, and Williams	
Downing Street	.....49	Bishop of, <i>temp.</i> Charles I.	.....510
Yeomen of the Guard	222, 224	Duchess of. <i>See</i> Wales,	
Yeoman Usher	.....223	Princess of	
Yerburgh, R. A. :		Duke of. <i>See</i> James II. and	
his weekly dinners at the		Wales, Prince of	
Junior Carlton Club228	Young, Arthur, his autobio-	
<i>The Pigtail Party</i>	335, 336	graphy, reference170

THE END

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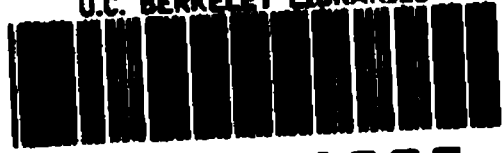
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